ERNST JÄCKH AND THE SEARCH FOR GERMAN CULTURAL
HEGEMONY IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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This thesis assesses German involvement in the Ottoman Empire through the role of the German cultural impresario Ernst Jäckh, who worked as an academic and publicist in Germany, Turkey, Great Britain, and the United States, and became the central figure in promoting a strategic German-Turkish alliance in the years before the First World War. A confidant of Friedrich Naumann, the champion of German soft power imperialism in Central Europe, Jäckh advocated the using “Peaceful Imperialism” to build cultural bonds between Germans and Turks through intercultural exchange, building a modern infrastructure and education system, and reorganizing the military. This would give Germany a needed ally in the region without the burdens of direct colonial rule.

The thesis draws on monographs and Jäckh’s extensive published and unpublished papers to provide a general history of German involvement in the Ottoman Empire. It further addresses German “Peaceful Imperialism,” German involvement in the Armenian genocide, and the role of German liberals during the Wilhelmine era.

Jäckh and other liberal figures involved in Wilhelmine “Peaceful Imperialism” supported German nationalism even though many would later support a democratic Germany. Moreover, “Peaceful Imperialism” anticipated the soft power nation building of great powers in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The question of German culpability in the Armenian genocide remains inconclusive. Some Germans supported or ignored the liquidation of the Armenians while others opposed it and were sympathetic to the Armenians. There is, however, a link between völkisch ideas and
genocide in Germany and Turkey. Long before National Socialism, cultural and political elites could not imagine peaceful co-existence of ethnic groups in one polity, envisioning future wars in which one nation vanquishes another. While German involvement in the Ottoman Empire was only one possible source of the idea of a mono-ethnic Turkish state (realized after the empire’s demise), the Armenian genocide involved some tactics that the Germans had used against indigenous peoples in Southwest Africa.
I dedicate this text to my family for their unwavering support over the course of my academic career.
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INTRODUCTION

This research project will assess German involvement in the Ottoman Empire, and more specifically German fascination with the Middle East, in the context of the Germans’ search for identity and quest to become a colonial power. This study will also provide a thorough examination of German influence on the political and social development of the Ottoman Empire in the crucial years preceding the First World War. The questions of whether Germans contributed to the development of a Turkish identity within the Ottoman Empire and to the ethnic conflict between the Turkish majority and Armenians will be addressed specifically. Moreover, the project will examine the notion of Peaceful Imperialism which played an integral role in Germany’s attempt to make the Ottoman Empire a client state. It will look not only at the success rate of the concept of Peaceful Imperialism, but will also analyze the figures who supported this movement in an attempt to shed light on their motivations for supporting such measures in the Ottoman Empire.

In order to examine the aforementioned topics, the research will focus specifically on the experiences of Dr. Ernst Jäckh in the Ottoman Empire between the years 1908-1918. Although Dr. Jäckh was by no means the only German liberal to actively call for a German-Turkish alliance, he was by far the most outspoken and convincing figure in the movement. Jäckh not only formed friendships and influenced important figures in the future Ottoman governments such as Enver Pasha, Minister of War during the First World War, but also founded the German-Turkish association, an organization dedicated to promoting the German-Turkish alliance. Dr. Jäckh, who was a political activist, journalist, and later professor, never lost his belief in the importance of the Turkish state after his initial visits in the early twentieth century. So much a
believer in the crucial geo-political role of Turkey, Jäckh continued to call attention to Turkey long after he had left Germany when the National Socialists came to power. As late as the 1950s, Jäckh advocated the Turkish cause from his position as professor at Columbia University in New York.

While Jäckh’s writings and memoirs have been cited in numerous works on German history dealing with the period in question, this will be the first research project to focus specifically on his experience in Turkey. The research will be aided by both published and unpublished portions of Jäckh’s memoirs as well as several monographs he wrote about the German-Turkish relations during the period.¹

Before undertaking a thorough examination of the aforementioned questions, the remaining portion of the introduction will provide the reader with a biographical overview of Jäckh. This will be followed by the first and second chapters, which will provide the necessary background knowledge about official and unofficial German involvement in the Middle East. The first chapter will specifically examine the role played by the “Orient” in German culture, literature, and public discourse through the eighteenth and nineteenth century², while the second chapter will focus on official German involvement in the Empire after the founding of the German Empire in 1871.

¹ Jäckh’s published portions of his memoirs in two works providing an autobiographical account of his life: Der golden Pflug:Lebensernte eines Weltbürgers (1954) and Weltsaat (1960). The rest of his memoirs and documents are held in the archives of Yale and Columbia Universities respectively.

² Throughout this work the term “Orient” is primarily referring to the holdings of the Ottoman Empire between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries. It should be noted that on account of the ambiguity of the word “Orient” and its different applications in various contexts the term can refer to a geographic area spanning from Central Europe to East Asia.
Ernst Jäckh: A Life in Three Worlds

Born 1875 in Urach, Germany, Jäckh worked as a publicist, political organizer, government agent, diplomat, and later as a professor until his death in 1959. Jäckh’s life, like the German nation itself in the first half of the twentieth century, went through a series of radical changes and identity crises. His life can be divided into three distinct periods, which reflect the tumultuous events that characterized German life during the period: the national ascension of Germany in the late Wilhelmine-era; the fight to define Germany’s place in the world in the interwar years; and finally exile from Germany during the Third Reich and the development of an identity in Great Britain and the United States. Starting his formal career as an ardent German nationalist and supporter of German imperial ambitions and ending it as a professor at Columbia University advocating the development of Area Studies programs and a strengthened American-Turkish relationship, Jäckh led an interesting and important life and had the fortune of being intimately involved in events and conflicts which shaped the world in the twentieth century. At the time of his death in 1959, Jäckh had published 21 monographs and countless articles on various geo-political topics, including the development of modern Turkey, travelogue through Albania, the German-Turkish relationship, as well as the American-German relationship.

Jäckh’s professional career began after the successful completion of his doctoral studies in 1899. He took a position as the head editor at the Heilbronner-Neckar Zeitung, which he held for more than a decade until 1912. Holding such an influential position allowed Jäckh to make numerous influential contacts throughout the German speaking world, including men such as Friedrich Naumann, Theodor Heuss, and Konrad Adenauer. Towards the end of his career at the Neckar Zeitung, Jäckh became interested in the Ottoman Empire after taking a cruise in the
region. This vacation sparked an interest in the Ottoman Empire, and particularly the Turkish people, that would influence much of the rest of his life.

After visiting the Ottoman Empire for the first time in 1908, he developed a deep admiration for the Turkish people and made a political career out of championing the Turkish cause in Germany. Jäckh used his connections and uncanny ability to form relationships with powerful people in both Germany and the Ottoman Empire in order promote a German-Turkish alliance in the years leading up to and during the First World War. After his initial experience in the Ottoman Empire, Jäckh wasted no time in promoting German-Turkish friendship. He published his first work about the region that same year, entitled *Der Aufsteigende Halbmond*. (Jäckh, *Crescent* 6). In a time when many were predicting the imminent collapse of the Ottoman Empire, known to many in the world at the time as the “Sick Man of Europe,” Jäckh became an outspoken supporter and optimist concerning the future of the Ottoman state. The position he took in his first monograph went against most other assessments of the Ottoman Empire in the period. The work was in fact a rebuttal to a popular work written in 1908 about the Ottoman Empire, entitled *The Declining Crescent*. (Jäckh Rising *Crescent* 6)

Jäckh used his political connections in Germany to men such as Friedrich Naumann to make contacts in Turkey. Kinderlen-Wächter, the German Ambassador to Turkey at the time of his first visit, took a particular liking to Jäckh and helped him make contacts at the highest level of the Ottoman government. (Jäckh, *Goldene Pflug* 123)³ These connections allowed Jäckh to befriend several members of the Young Turkish Revolution such as Muktar Bey. (124) Once he made the initial contacts, Jäckh was able to use his extraordinary interpersonal skills to solidify friendships and working relationships with key figures in both the German and Ottoman state.

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³ Jäckh later published a book about Kinderlen-Wächter from his from a collection of his personal letters and official correspondence.
For example, Jäckh was able to meet and befriend the young Mustafa Kemal, now commonly known as Atatürk, while he was still a captain during the Young Turk Revolution. His friendship with Hans Humann, a German who had grown up in the Ottoman Empire and was fluent in Turkish (Morgenthau 30), was also very important. Not only was Humann fluent in Turkish, but he also gave him access to high level Ottoman officials and an understanding of the situation in Turkey that would have otherwise not been possible for a foreigner with a limited command of the language and understanding of the local mentality. An example of the benefits reaped from a close relationship to Humann can be seen during the Italo-Turkish war of 1911 and 1912, when Jäckh was able view intimate letters from Enver Pasha, one of the three Pashas during the crucial years of the First World War (160-167). Using his connections, Jäckh visited the Empire again during an insurrection in Albania and was able to accompany the Ottoman military while engaging the insurgents. In 1912, Jäckh helped form the German-Turkish association, which was responsible for bringing many Turkish students and apprentices to Germany as well as providing lectures and language courses about the Middle East in Germany (Kloosterhuis 612-619). In 1914, He was granted a position as a professor of Turkish History at the University of Berlin (Jäckh, Yale Papers Slide 1).

During the First World War, Jäckh became instrumental in facilitating the partnership between Germany and Turkey. He officially worked for the German diplomatic service as a representative of the German general headquarters. Jäckh worked vigorously during these years to raise money and interest in Germany for the Turkish cause, and was relatively successful in convincing many important individuals in both Turkey and Germany of the importance of their cooperation. His interaction in the highest political circles of both countries gave him the ability to understand the various actors involved on both the German and Turkish sides.
After the German and Turkish defeat in the First World War, Jäckh changed the focus of his career. Faced with the defeat of Germany, the dissolution of both the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires, and the death of his son, Hans, on the western front, Jäckh was given little choice but to reevaluate both his personal and professional life. In the 1920s, Jäckh, along with other liberal-minded thinkers and political strategists such as Theodor Heuss and Carl Heinrich Becker, was one of the founding members of the Deutsche Hochschule für Politik. The school looked to foster the growth of democratic ideals in the young and unstable Weimar Republic. Jäckh gave lectures throughout Europe and Germany to promote international cooperation and Germany’s ascension in the newly formed League of Nations. In the second half of the 1920s, Jäckh even began travelling to the United States and Canada, where he called for further international cooperation and introduced North American audiences to the new democratic Germany that was forming at the time. In 1927, he even published an English language book of his lecture series entitled *The New Germany* (Jäckh, Weltsaat 105-121).

However, similar to his assessment of the Ottoman Empire on the eve of the First World War, Jäckh’s assessment concerning Germany’s future proved to be untrue. The economic collapse in Germany in the late 1920s coupled with the rise of extreme right and left wing parties increasingly overshadowed centrist liberal voices. The Hochschule für Politik, which supported a moderate democratic course for Germany, became irrelevant in a time of high unemployment and general dissatisfaction with democratic and capitalistic institutions. Once the National Socialists rose to power in 1933, Jäckh, along with many other scholars associated with the liberal-oriented Hochschule für Politik, realized that he had no place in a totalitarian Germany and emigrated abroad.
After careful consideration, Jäckh, who had employment offers in both the United Kingdom and the United States, chose to go to England. It is important to note that emigration for Jäckh, a man who enjoyed a large number of contacts across both North America and Europe, was not as desperate as it was for others in the era. In his memoirs, Jäckh claimed that the proximity to events going on in Europe coupled with the fact that the British took the threat posed by the Nazi regime more seriously than the Americans helped convince him to settle in England (147). After arriving in London, Jäckh began working for the New Common Wealth Society and then the British Foreign Office (146-158). During this period, Jäckh worked to solidify transatlantic cooperation against Soviet expansion and conducted political analysis of various geopolitical events on the continent for the British Foreign Office (188-211).

In 1940, Jäckh was offered a guest professorship in the Political Science Department at Columbia University. Here, Jäckh was once again able to focus on his interest in Middle Eastern Affairs. Jäckh was one of the first professors at the University who focused completely on the dynamics and problems of the modern Middle East (213). As the Second World War in Europe escalated, however, Jäckh spent much of his time trying to convince Americans of the need to enter the war against the Nazi Regime (215). He spoke at many events and wrote several articles calling for increased American involvement in supplying the British and aiding them in the policing of international sea lanes (216-217). Jäckh continued however to speak of the importance of Turkey and the entire Middle East during and immediately after the war.

In the postwar years, Jäckh once again became a strong advocate of Turkey. This time he was not dreaming of German hegemony from “Berlin to Baghdad,” but rather Turkish membership in the newly created NATO. He had been a supporter of the Truman Doctrine and believed that Turkish security from Russian aggression was absolutely necessary to ensure the
safety of Europe (227). Jäckh was so convinced of Turkey’s importance that he wrote a letter to the Assistant Secretary of State Burton Berry in 1950 urging the United States to solidify its partnership with Turkey (227). In addition to his efforts to bring Turkey into the western alliance, Jäckh was also successful in developing a Middle East Institute at Columbia University, an area studies program dedicated to the study of the Middle East, as well as an American-Turkish association based on similar ideals to the one he had founded in Germany a generation before.

Besides providing a fascinating story of man who was a transatlantic globetrotter before the age of modern global interconnectivity, Jäckh’s life also offers the researcher a prime example of the connection between Wilhelmine liberal nationalism and Weimar liberalism. The contemporary observer is inclined to view Jäckh and men of his ilk as the founders of German democracy, the leaders of the German Democratic Party (DDP) in the Weimar years. While Jäckh and many of his political confidants made a valiant effort to establish democratic institutions in Germany in the Weimar years, they were clearly staunch nationalists in the Wilhelmine era. Thus, one of the most fascinating facets of Jäckh’s career is his ability to redefine himself and his political stances with the changing circumstances in Germany.

In order to give the reader a clearer understanding as to why a figure like Jäckh, a liberal-minded intellectual, would have become interested in the Middle East and the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century, the next two chapters will provide a thorough overview of the role of the Orient in German culture and public discourse.
CHAPTER 1: DEFINING THE GERMAN ORIENT

Due to Germany’s status as a belated nation state, it is impossible to examine German involvement in the Orient from state policies and imperialist ambitions in the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century. Unlike the British and the French who had massive imperial apparatuses in the region and thus left behind a extensive body of diplomatic and official communication, the German Orient of the period was “exclusively a scholarly endeavor” (Said 18-19). While one could view the scholarly foundation of German interest in the Middle East as a sign of weakness and inability to project power abroad, a complete omission of the German view of the region would be irresponsible for anyone studying the relationship between Orient and Occident for several reasons.

First, German orientalists had an enormous impact on the field of Oriental Studies in the West. In the first half of the eighteenth century, “English, French, and Dutch orientalists of this generation made the Orient a career by going there, as officials or travelers, German orientalists on the other hand made the Orient a career by becoming academics” (Marchand 466). It was perhaps the inferiority complex of German orientalists of this period, who did not have a large state sponsor or state run trading or colonial presence to administer, that led many of them to take a prominent role in the field of Oriental academic research. Despite the lack of a unified state or official presence, the German commitment to study the Orient, and especially its languages and cultures, developed rather rapidly. Evidence of this can be seen in the types of appointments made at the university level in the early nineteenth century. As early as the 1820s, the universities of Berlin and Bonn had already appointed two Sanskrit philologists to professorships (Marchand 466). Sanskrit was, of course, not the only aspect of the Orient being studied. There was also research being done on Semitic literature and Islamic culture. The
influence of the German scholarly tradition in the field of Oriental studies continued in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Scholars, such as Theodor Nöldeke and Carl Heinrich Becker, were instrumental in introducing Europeans to the Islamic world. Nöldeke’s *Geschichte des Korans* (1859), which was actually first published in French, enjoyed an especially high level of recognition among scholars in Europe.

Secondly, the lack of a unified German state and the search for a common German identity in the period provides the researcher with a European view of the Orient that is not nearly as clear-cut as the perspective of other European nations. Not sure of their place in the world or within a greater Europe throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Germans “oscillated between identifying their country with the rest of Europe against the Orient and allying themselves with selected parts of the East against the West” (Kontje 2-3).

This dichotomy can be seen clearly with respect to the image of the Turk. As early as 1529, during the time of the First Ottoman Siege of Vienna, Martin Luther declared “Wer gegen die Türken kämpft, kämpft gegen den Teufel” (Berman 25). In distinguishing the Turk from the German, Luther remarked “Sie trinken nicht wein, sauffen und fressen nicht so, wie wir es tun.” In response to Ottoman aggression against Central Europe and the ongoing Siege of Vienna, Luther made clear to his readers that one should expect the utmost barbarity from the Turks. He claimed that the Turk “schendet oder würget dir dein weib und töchter vor deinen augen, zuhacket deine kinder und spiesset sie auf deine zaunstecken“ (Berman 25-26).

The negative association of the Turk continued well into the nineteenth century. The fear of the Turkish hordes at the Gates of Vienna not only provided the German speaking world with a common enemy, but also provided them with a chance to define what was German. As a result
of the conflict, Turks came to represent everything that was uncivilized, unchristian, and most importantly not German.

As the nineteenth century progressed, however, the Turks began to take on a new image. With the new German Empire in a position of power and in need of allies in the late nineteenth century, the image of the Turk as a brutal heathen was rehabilitated. Looking to form a strategic alliance with the Turkmen ruling class of the Ottoman Empire, Germans looked to form a relationship with the Turks akin to an older brother watching out for a younger sibling. Germany would aid the Turks in their modernization process and help them consolidate their power in the Middle East and the Balkans as the Germans had done in Central Europe. By the early twentieth century, the image of the once archenemy had changed so much so that there were thousands of Germans active in the modernization of the Ottoman education system, military, and basic infrastructure. In analyzing the new relationship between Germany and the Ottoman Empire, the German publicist Ernst Jäckh believed that this new alliance would be of great strategic importance to Germany. He called for more than just a formal military alliance and hoped for a German-Turkish “Waffenbrüderschaft” in the Middle East. As can be seen from the transformation of the Turk from archenemy to strategic partner, it is precisely Germany’s belated founding and lack of a large imperial apparatus which make it so fascinating.

Additionally, Germany’s unique state-sponsored attempts at nation building in the Ottoman Empire during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century provide a useful example of a soft-power imperialist approach to the Middle East. As this study will argue, the German relationship with the Ottoman Empire in the period in question is in fact far more pertinent to current concepts of nation building and neo-imperialism in the twenty-first century.
As a result, these efforts deserve to be taken just as seriously as the large scale undertakings of the British and the French.

On account of the German experience in the Orient, one is forced to question whether one can neatly apply the generally accepted theoretical models currently utilized in postcolonial studies, or sub-altern studies, to the German experience. Instead of attempting to apply post-colonial-studies theories, which were specifically developed for the large scale colonial projects of the British and French, it is more useful to look at what made the German experience unique.

When examining the differences in the development of national imperial strategies, one must begin with the central question of identity, and more precisely, how the members of a given society form their own identity. Successful imperial powers not only possessed formidable navies and ground forces, but also entered into colonial holdings with a firm idea of the type of economic and cultural identity they wished to export once they took control. Thus, the integral institutional difference between Germany’s imperialist experiences and those of its European rivals was the fact that the Germans had barely formed a common national identity when the state began acquiring colonies in the 1880s. The formation of German identity based on a series of calculated wars and a limited concept of a “Kulturnation” in the late 1860s and early 1870s made it an unlikely candidate for large scale imperial undertakings. Even after a German state had been founded in 1871, the Germans were far from having developed a common exportable identity.

Due to the fact that the German experience was quite different from other European powers, its treatment was often neglected or omitted. Edward Said, for example, completely omits the treatment of German scholarship in the field of Oriental Studies in his work Orientalism. He justifies this by claiming that “there was nothing in Germany to correspond to the Anglo-French presence in India, the Levant, and North Africa. Moreover, the German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical Orient: It was made the subject of lyrics, fantasies, and novels, but it was never actual, the way Egypt and Syria were actual for Chateaubriand, Lane, Lamartine, Burton, Disraeli, or Nerval”. Said’s work, however, does not take into account the relationship and subsequent alliance of Muslim Turks and Germans in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was a relationship between a European country and a country in the Orient (Near East) that clearly did not fit into the typical imperialist power structures of the period.
In fact, the early years of the Empire were plagued by regional differences and the internal cultural consolidation of the *Kulturkampf*. If Germans themselves could not define their own identity, how could the state apparatus impose that identity on subject peoples in imperial holdings? Thus, the ideas for a liberal imperial approach to the Middle East in the early twentieth century was a product of Germany’s inability to define itself and assert itself internationally in the same way as the British and the French.

Since the formation of German identity in this period was instrumental in providing the basis for the Peaceful Imperialist movement, the next section will take a closer look at the development of German identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and more clearly define the influence of Germany’s fragmented national identity in the development of the liberal imperialist approach.

**German Identity and the Development of Peaceful Imperialism**

In order to examine the development of a modern German national identity, the most appropriate starting point within the parameters of this research is the eighteenth century. During this period, and indeed well before it, the push for national unity came from German intellectuals (*Bildungsbürgertum*) and members of the merchant class. Attempting to construct a national identity based on models in other European nations, they faced several obstacles and enjoyed limited support from the aristocracy. First, the German world had been carved into hundreds of independent principalities as a result of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. This not only divided the German world politically and religiously, but also greatly hindered commerce and the transfer of information. These political divisions only intensified the regional linguistic and cultural differences, which still remain an integral part of German identity on the individual
level. With the German-speaking world divided on so many levels, one of the most efficient ways of constructing a German identity was therefore to identify the other, namely that which was clearly not German instead of focusing on what was.

As Germans were embroiled in an inner struggle to define their place in the world in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European contact with the civilizations and people in previously inaccessible places, such as sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, was increasing. The confrontation with different skin colors, stature, and customs led not only to a fascination with cultural and racial differences, but also sparked interest among intellectuals in systematically defining them. The Germans, like other European nations, were active participants in this endeavor.

Johann Friedrich Blumenbach noted in *De generis humani varietate native* in 1775 that based on observation of skin color and skull shape there were five clearly distinguishable races (Kontje 4). Immanuel Kant however came to the conclusion that there were only four races “white European, black African, yellow Asian, and copper-red American Indian” (Kontje 4). While there is evidence of some unbiased scientific research in this area, such as the neutral descriptions of Polynesians by Johann Forster while working as a member of Captain Cook’s crew during his second circumnavigation of the world, other writers took these apparent racial differences to another level and used them as criteria to judge human beings and classify the productivity of specific groups of humans.5 An example of this can be seen in the writings of Christopher Meiners, a polygenist theorist and strong critic of the Enlightenment. He states bluntly that “dark-skinned peoples are not only ugly, but also stupid and vicious” (Kontje 4).

5 For a complete description of the voyage and Forster’s view of native peoples please consult the following work. Berman, Russell A. *Enlightenment or Empire: Colonial Discourse in German Culture*. Modern German culture and literature. Lincoln, Neb: University of Nebraska Press, 1998.
The classification of humans into groups was not simply done in the name of scientific research. In Germany, as in other European nations, this type of research not only attempted to justify colonial ambitions, but was also integral in fostering the belief among the masses that their own society was superior. This was especially true in the German speaking world, where the new field of scientific research would not only prove European superiority, but could also be used as a tool to help give a definitive picture of what racial and social characteristics were uniquely German. Thus, the German contact with peoples in these exotic places served a different purpose for the Germans as compared to other Europeans. Instead of being seen as subjects in need of European acculturation, the native peoples were seen as a tool through which one could better understand and formulate a common German racial identity.

The German response to these new cultures, while mostly negative, did however find one particular point of fascination with and admiration of the pre-modern, pre-enlightenment elements in these cultures. As this research will demonstrate in the analysis of the Peaceful Imperialists, this longing for a pre-modern world will later become central to the fascination of many of the Germans with the Ottoman Empire.

An example of this viewpoint can be seen in the writings of Johann Gottfried Herder, who had spent significant time analyzing other cultures and defining German identity and nationalism. Kontje notes that in *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* (1773) Herder speaks of “binary oppositions that value the primitive over the modern, feeling over form, and nature over art” (Kontje 66). While Herder clearly does not reject the notion of European superiority over other races, his position, like that of Germany, is not firmly rooted in the Western European tradition. His fascination with the primitive and a connection to nature as well as his willingness to reject reason over emotion are in direct opposition to the Enlightenment and question its teleological
world view. Herder saw this primitiveness in other cultures as a sign of purity and respected it accordingly, no matter what his overall opinion of the level of development in the society was. This admiration of the primitive and rejection of certain aspects of the Enlightenment undoubtedly had a deep connection with the desire of German intellectuals to form a nation that was not entirely based on the philosophies of Britain and France (Kontje 66-68).

While it was, on the one hand, necessary for German intellectuals to partake in the same research as their European counterparts in order to show that Germans were indeed a nation that was capable of producing literature and historical analysis on the same level as the British and the French, there was also just as much of a need to separate Germany from the cultural traditions of the other European powers. For example, Herder detested the fact that the German elite of his day had been so heavily influenced by the French. He believed that a German nation could only come into existence once Germans would throw off the shackles of French influence. Moreover, Herder attributed the success of the British with regard to culture and prominence in the world not to their vast trading empire and relatively open society, but rather to the fact that they have “remained true to their cultural roots and thus produce first rate literature that reaches a wide audience whereas Germans had adopted the foreign garb of the French” (Kontje 68).

Moreover, the fact that Herder focuses more on literature and high culture rather than on economic development when assessing the British Empire also highlights a much deeper divide in the formation of German identity as opposed to the national identities of its European neighbors. This structural difference in the German intellectual tradition, which will be treated in the next section, further explains Germany’s lack of success in colonial endeavors in the late nineteenth century. Moreover, it will make clear why the Germans saw a nation-building role

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6 With regard to proponents of the Liberal Imperialist movement at the end of the nineteenth century, this longing for the pre-modern was clearly related to the trauma of rapid industrialization in Germany.
and strategic relationship with the Turkish elite in the Ottoman Empire as more desirable than any type of direct imperial rule.

German Identity: Between “Zivilisation” and “Kultur”

To understand the fundamental difference between the development of modern Germany society and its European counterparts, it is extremely helpful to refer to Norbert Elias’ notion of the difference between a “Kultur” and “Zivilisation” in his work The Civilizing Process. (1968)⁷. As was already mentioned, the catalyst for national unity in Germany did not come from a central government or monarch. It came from middle class intellectuals and artisans who had no control over their political fate. Their attempts to form a German identity were therefore not a set of policies implemented by a governing body, but rather focused efforts of individual scholarship and research on creating an historic foundation for modern German identity. Because a common German identity existed only in the realm of scholarship, Germans, to the extent that they recognized a common identity or tradition, viewed the building blocks of German identity as being outside of the realm of politics and commerce. Their nation was not a state, but rather a “Kultur” or a “Kulturkraut.” Elias notes that the French and the British systems, which had existed for hundreds of years as both political and cultural entities, would on the other hand be classified as “Zivilisationen.” Elias states:

To a certain extent, the concept of civilization plays down the national differences between peoples; it emphasizes what is common to all human beings or—in the view of its bearers—should be. It expresses the self-assurance of people whose

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⁷ The work was originally published in German in 1939 with the title Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation. Soziogenetische und psychogenetische Untersuchungen.
national identities have for centuries been so firmly established that they have ceased to be the subject of any particular discussion, peoples which have long expanded outside their border and colonized beyond them. (7)

“Zivilisationen” are based on ideals and can change and adapt to various situations. Moreover, the national culture is so solidified in such states, for example in contemporary Great Britain or the United States, that most segments of the society do not feel threatened if acceptance into the society is based on inclusionary ideals. Membership or a sense of belonging in the society can be relatively easily offered to foreigners as long as they are willing to follow the specific set of social norms and values for that particular society. The German concept of “Kultur,” on the other hand, naturally limits the expansion possibilities for any society. It uses concepts such as ethnicity, language, and local traditions to construct the “imagined community” of the nation. In a “Kulturnation” it is, therefore, not a question of whether one can become part of a society. One simply belongs to the “Kulturnation” based on racial affiliation and cultural traditions with no ability to expand or change that identity.

The fact that Germany was founded on a limited version of the “Kulturnation”8 concept made the nation from the outset an extremely poor candidate for imperialist undertakings. Germans, who had barely come to terms with their own national identity, were in no way capable of exporting their civilization on the same level as the British and the French. This fact is further proved by the ineffectiveness and, in some cases, disastrous efforts at forming colonies.9 None of the German colonial engagements were of great success. In the most important German colony, German Southwest Africa, mismanagement and a lack of pragmatism on the part of the

8 One must note here that German-speaking Austrians, who most definitely considered themselves as part of the German “Kulturnation,” were excluded from the German Empire based on shrewd political calculations. This would and still does have a great influence over the identity of modern Austria.
9 The low point of German colonial administration came in Herero and Namaqua Wars of 1904-1908. The Germans used various tactics to lure the Herero Namaqua into the desert where scores of them perished.
military led to a costly campaign against the Herero and Namaqua tribes. The campaign not only cost the German state a significant amount in blood and treasure, but also led to the development of specific military doctrine that called for the extermination of the enemy Herero and Namaqua tribes.\textsuperscript{10} The conflict ended with the German army committing acts of genocide against the tribesmen and solidified the notion among top military planners that wars of total annihilation (\textit{Vernichtungskriege}) were a viable military tactic. While other European nations also used heavy handed tactics in their colonial undertakings to further solidify their position in the colonies, the official German imperial efforts gained little from their military intervention and were unable to integrate natives into the German colonial structure.

The next chapter of this project will give a brief overview of official involvement of the German State in the Ottoman Empire after 1871. It will examine how the German-Ottoman relationship developed from a loose association in the 1880s to a military alliance. It will focus on how the German project in the Ottoman Empire distinguished itself from other imperial projects and ultimately became a prime example of soft-power imperialism in the age of great colonial empires.

\textsuperscript{10} For a complete analysis of the genocide and the development of the Military Doctrine see Hull, Isabel V. \textit{Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany}. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005.
CHAPTER II: THE GERMAN STATE DISCOVERS THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

After the formation of a unified German state in 1871, there was broad-based public support to join European counterparts in the great scramble for colonial possessions. In fact, colonial societies and various German business interests had been advocating German expansion abroad even before the formation of a unified German state. With respect to the territories of the Ottoman Empire, there was great excitement over the possibility of Germans acquiring farmland in inner-Anatolia or the Balkans (Fuhrman 47-65). These dreams of colonial grandeur however never materialized on a large scale.

Germany’s lack of naval power coupled with the conservative Realpolitik approach of its first Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, thwarted early hopes for wide scale German imperialist ambitions. Although Germany acquired a limited number of colonies in the 1880s during Bismarck’s time as Chancellor, the main goal of this policy was to appease colonial organizations and strengthen domestic political support. None of the colonial possessions were of any significant geo-strategic importance nor did they threaten the balance of power between European nations. In most cases, they were not even self-sustaining or profitable and required subsidies from the German government in order to function.

This risk-averse and half-hearted policy with regard to colonial expansion continued even after Bismarck’s dismissal. An example of this can be seen in the months after Bismarck’s dismissal in 1890 when Germany negotiated the Helgoland-Zanzibar treaty with Great Britain. In the treaty, Germany relinquished claims to an enormous amount of land in Africa, including coastal parts of Kenya, Uganda as well the strategic island of Zanzibar, in order to obtain the

\[11\] Bismarck, who was clearly suspect of any form of colonial acquisition, showed even less interest in the Near East and the Balkans. He once stated that the whole region was not “worth the bones of a single Pomerianian Grenadier.”
island of Helgoland in the North Sea (Kitchen 184). When presented a chance to gain a strategic location in Europe, the German political establishment was more than willing to give up any colony.

Those outside of high political circles viewed the colonial question differently. Despite the rapid development of the German economy and its cultural hegemony over its Central European periphery, many prominent intellectuals and politicians not only felt that Germany needed colonial possessions to be considered a great power, but also showed deep resentment at the fact that other powers, especially Great Britain, were actively impeding Germany’s imperial efforts. Leading the efforts to bring Germany into the scramble for colonies were men like Ferdinand Farbi. Farbi’s Bedarf Deutschland der Colonien? (1879) was the most influential manifesto in the early years of the Empire (Berman 136). Farbi vehemently argued that the acquisition of colonies was necessary for Germany to make use of its ever expanding population while at the same time allowing these people to retain their German character.12 The generation of German intellectuals who had come of age during the first years of the Empire clearly believed that the ruling aristocracy had been far too conservative in matters of German colonial expansion. In their minds, Germany, like any great power, deserved its “Platz an der Sonne.” Thus, German supporters of colonial expansion faced a situation unlike that of other like-minded individuals in other European nations in that they never enjoyed the unwavering support of the political establishment in their colonial aspirations. Moreover, with much of the prized areas of Africa and Asia already under imperial administration at the end of the nineteenth century, supporters of German colonialism not only had to look elsewhere, very often to strategically and

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12 Mass immigration, especially to the United States, in the years after the 1848 revolution led to widespread fear that Germany needed to find new places for Germans to settle and continue living in a German cultural setting.
economically less important places, to expand their influence, but also realized that new methods must be found to exert German power outside of the standard imperialist paradigm.

German liberals and military strategists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw Germany’s opportunity for further geopolitical influence in the export of ideas and technical know-how. The building of infrastructure, education systems, and the indoctrination of the elite of weaker nations would serve as a model for this new approach to world affairs. Instead of administering direct control over a colonial possession, as did the British in India, Germany would identify weaker states and seek to build lasting political, cultural, and economic ties (Fuhrman *nation building*, 241). This would, in turn, ensure German influence in the region without the necessity for direct German rule. This so-called “Liberal” or “Peaceful” Imperialism was not only useful in offering Germans a venue in which they could compete with their European counterparts, it also provided the liberal-minded intellectuals the chance to morally justify German expansionist aspirations as being a more enlightened and refined form of imperial rule than that which was offered by other European powers.

The Ottoman Empire, in a perpetual state of decline since its defeat at the gates of Vienna in 1683, provided fertile ground for such experimentation. The Ottoman holdings spanned from the deserts of Arabia to the Balkan Peninsula on the Adriatic Coast. The Anatolian heartland was located along the ancient Silk Road trade routes. Equipped with modern road and rail infrastructure, it would provide the fastest overland trade route to Asia and thus limit the significance of the British-controlled Suez Canal.

Additionally, the Ottoman Empire had fascinated German philologists, explorers and the general public throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even before the founding of a unified German state, there were numerous examples of German interest in the region.
Missionaries and merchants had been active, especially in Ottoman port cities, for most of the nineteenth century (Fuhrmann *deutschen Orient*, 39-47). Prussian General Helmut Karl Bernhard von Moltke was already calling for the German penetration into modern day Anatolia in the late 1840s during his service as a military advisor for the Ottoman Sultan (Friedmann, 3). Moltke learned to speak Turkish, travelled extensively in the region, and wrote two books about his time in the Empire. As was mentioned earlier, German scholars conducted highly regarded research on the culture and religion of the region.

This interest in the region was in no way limited to the upper echelons of society and also found strong resonance in mass culture. For example, there was much excitement about the archeological work of Heinrich Schliemann in the early years of the Empire. Schliemann was a German archeologist and spent significant time in the region conducting archeological digs. In 1873, he instantly became famous after discovering the ruins of Troy. Even popular novelist Karl May was fascinated with the Orient. Evidence of this can be seen in the series of novels he wrote in the 1880s known as the “Orientzyklus.” May, who enjoyed celebrity status in the German-speaking world for his writings about the American West, wrote a popular set of novels which followed the main protagonist, Kara Ben Nemsi Effendi, in a murder mystery adventure through the various regions of the Ottoman Empire. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Orient took on an even more important role in German popular culture and solidified itself in the German popular imagination. Kaiser Willhelm’s excursions to the region coupled with the highly controversial Baghdad and Hedjaz railway projects put Germany’s relationship with the Orient at the center of international political intrigues throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The next section will take a closer look at official German involvement

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in the Ottoman Empire in order to situate the development of a liberal imperialist strategy in the
Ottoman Empire.

Official German Involvement in the Ottoman Empire

Considering the Ottoman Empire’s strategic importance and the level of fascination with
the region that transcended all levels of German society during the Gründerzeit, it is no surprise
that proponents of “Peaceful Imperialism” viewed the Ottoman Empire as an ideal place for
German penetration. However, their notion of a “peaceful penetration” of the Orient was
preceded by almost 20 years of strategic partnership between the two governments at the end of
the nineteenth century.

The official presence of the German state began in the early 1880s with a military
mission to modernize the Ottoman Army. This initial engagement quickly expanded to include
the aid of German financial institutions in the building of large infrastructure projects. Although
Germany made no formal attempts at land annexation or the granting of protectorate status, its
involvement in the modernization attempts of the Empire were nevertheless substantial and in
some ways mimicked the actions of a colonial power. Some of the projects, such as the Baghdad
and Hedjaz railways, were considered some of the most advanced engineering feats of the time.

The Baghdad railway, which was initially planned to extend from the Asian shore of
Istanbul to a point on the Persian Gulf, was particularly impressive and caused much controversy
between the European powers. It was the topic of a plethora of monographs and newspaper
articles in the period and clearly contributed to Germany’s isolation from the international
community in the years leading into the First World War. The British, in particular, feared that a
completed Baghdad railway would not only threaten its domination of trade routes to Asia, but
would also allow the German navy to build installations on the Persian Gulf, which in turn could jeopardize its naval interests in the vast waters of the Indian Ocean.

While not as controversial as the Baghdad railway, the Hedjaz railway was just as impressive in its scope and ambition as the Baghdad railway project. This rail line would run from Istanbul to the holy city of Medina in modern day Saudi Arabia. Financed in part from donations of Muslims across the entire world, the railway would not only aid pilgrims making the annual hajj, but would also be an opportunity for Germans to win support across the entire Muslim world and showcase their engineering talents. The industrial projects did not stop with the building of rail infrastructure. They also included a far flung project to irrigate the Konia plains in the Anatolian heartland. Setting the standards high, German publicists and engineers spoke of turning the region into the “bread basket” of the entire Near East. All of these projects were difficult to finance and required the support of Kaiser Willhelm II, an ardent supporter of Germany’s presence in the Orient, to deal with the political and financial hurdles.

The Kaiser was so fascinated with the Middle East that he made two trips to the region with a full entourage. These trips along with his intervention on behalf of Moroccan independence and neutrality in the early twentieth century not only portrayed Germany as a protector of Muslim interests, but also further isolated Germany from the other European powers. His trip to modern day Palestine in 1898 was emblematic of his pompous and politically tactless style. He travelled via ship, along with over seven hundred guests and servants, and created much publicity throughout the entire world (Gruender 240-245). In an interesting side-note to history, Kaiser Wilhelm even met with Theodor Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement, during this trip and discussed the possibility of supporting Jewish settlements in Palestine (Gruender, 240-250).
Building on the impressive work of German engineers and military advisors as well as the publicity of the Kaiser in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the third phase of German involvement was initiated by Liberal Imperialists, such as Ernst Jäckh, Paul Rohrbach, Friedrich Naumann, and Theodor Heuss at the beginning of the twentieth century. They produced a vast body of literature and founded organizations to foster the German-Turkish friendship. The German-Turkish association, which was founded by Jäckh, was instrumental in providing scholarships and intimate access to Ottoman elites (Kaiser 15). These direct cultural exchanges between the Ottoman elite and Germany proved useful in building lasting relationships between the German government and important individuals in the Ottoman government. German influence reached the highest levels of the Ottoman State and included Enver Pasha, Minister of War, in the crucial years during the First World War.

The cooperation culminated during the First World War when the two sides formed an official military alliance and even named the German General Limon von Sanders head of the Turkish armed forces. While this alliance was abruptly ended by the defeat and disintegration of both empires in the war, it provides us with a unique attempt at soft power imperialism. Moreover, Ernst Jäckh, one of the leading members of the propaganda campaign to form an alliance with the Ottoman Empire, became a staunch advocate of Area Studies programs in the United States where he helped found the Middle East Institute at Columbia University.

Before analyzing the efforts of the Peaceful Imperialists through the exploits of Ernst Jäckh, the next section will examine a member of the German Military Mission, Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz, a military strategist at the war college in Berlin. It will show how his relationship with the Ottoman Empire, and specifically with the Turkmen ruling class, did not arise from a belief that Ottomans were equals or that the Ottomans would some day be able to reach the same
level of cultural refinement as the Germans. On the contrary, the initial fascination with the Ottoman Empire for Germans is based on anti-modern and romantic German ideals. It is important to analyze von der Goltz’s point of view because it stands in stark contrast to that of Jäckh and the Peaceful Imperialists. The difference represents a clear generational divide in Wilhelmine society. The aristocratic Jünkertum of von der Goltz’s generation saw an uncorrupted pre-industrialized society in most of the Ottoman holdings. It was their mission to bring this pre-industrialized empire into modernity without losing the latter’s traditional cultural foundation. This fascination and love affair with the Ottoman Empire had as much to do with an attempt to overcome the trauma of rapid industrialization to the German psyche as it did with a sustained effort to turn the Ottoman Empire into a viable strategic partner. Jäckh and the younger generation of liberals were not as concerned with the rapid industrialization of Germany. As men who had come of age during this time of great change, they were comfortable with Germany being a modern industrialized society and were far more excited by the hope of liberal democratic change after the Young Turk Revolution in 1908.

Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz and the German Military Mission

The German Military Mission to the Ottoman Empire began in 1882. On the surface, it may seem strange that Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876-1899) chose to seek assistance from Germany, a country which at that time had only existed for 10 years. However, after one takes a closer look at the geo-political dynamics of the period, his decision to enter into a partnership with the Germans becomes more apparent.

First, he admired the organization of the German Army and was clearly impressed by its victory over France in 1870-71. Additionally and perhaps most importantly, the young German
state, unlike the British, French or the Russian, had no underlying interest in destabilizing the
Ottoman Empire. A partnership and perhaps a strategic alliance with the German state would not
only counter imperial ambitions of other powers, but would also restore the prestige and fighting
capabilities of the Ottoman armed forces. While the alliance offered the Ottoman establishment
the best option in its position of weakness and instability, it was by no means a perfect match.
Germany’s ally Austria-Hungary had taken de facto control over the Ottoman provinces of
Bosnia and Herzegovina as a result of the Congress of Berlin in 1878, and it seemed that this
new alliance with the Germans would do little to get back the provinces or allow the Turks to
reestablish their hegemony in the Balkans.

The main officer in charge of the German mission and the first to arrive in Istanbul was
Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz. Von der Goltz, a well- respected professor and analyst at the
War College in Potsdam, viewed his appointment in Turkey as a romantic crusade where he
would lead the modernization process of the Turkish military (Fuhrman, Nation Building 231).
Unlike German industrialists and politicians who were weary of undertakings in the unstable
Ottoman Empire, Goltz embodied the positive romantic view of Turkey shared by German
military explorers in the region such as Helmut Karl Bernhard von Moltke and Hugo Grothe
(Friedmann, 1-4). The “Peaceful Imperialists” would adapt this romantic notion of the Middle
East to fit their needs while at the same time maintaining some of its anti-modern stances. The
next section will take a closer look at this schizophrenic modernist/anti-modernists world view
developed by von der Goltz.
The Goltzian View of the Orient

Goltz’s admiration of the Turkish people was based on his view that the modern world had corrupted the German people from their prior state of living at one with the natural environment around them. The majority of the Turkish people, and this was especially true of the rural peasants in Anatolia, were still living in an uncorrupted state with nature. It was therefore in his mind imperative to aid the Ottoman Empire in its process of modernization not only in a way which would suit German interests, but also allow the Turks to retain their pre-modern spirit within modern institutions (Fuhrman 150-160).

Von der Goltz not only desired to aid the Turks in their modernization efforts, but also saw a much deeper connection between the two cultures. While Von der Goltz clearly did not view the Turks as equals to the Germans or other European powers, he was still deeply impressed by the fact that the Turks still had control of a vast multi-ethnic empire. The Turks, like the Germans in central Europe, were the *Herrenrasse* of their respective domains. Each had the burden of taming and culturing their respective areas of influence.

This dream for simpler pre-modern times had firm grounding in German society. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, Germany was in the midst of rapid urbanization and industrialization. Cities in the Ruhr valley region, such as Essen and Dortmund, had been rapidly transformed from obscurity to powerhouses of modern industry within the span of a lifetime. The old societal structures were quickly coming undone and Prussian aristocratic officers, like von der Goltz, were left uncertain of their place in this new society. The future of traditional German society and the aristocratic societal structures upon which society had been built in the nineteenth century were under attack on all fronts.
Popular figures, such as Friedrich Nietzsche and Richard Wagner, were emblematic of the prevailing Zeitgeist of the period and represented the feeling that modern German society had lost its traditional foundation in the vast confusion of the modern world. This type of thinking, which had widespread appeal in elite circles in Germany, questioned the values and perceived decadence of a modern society and openly advocated a return to old German traditions (Fuhrmann 51). An example of this world view can be seen in Goltz’s depiction of the Ottoman Empire while travelling through its possessions in the Balkans. He noted:

“ Aber wir vergessen bei den reißenden Fortschritten, die das Abendland seit 30 Jahren gemacht hat, nur zu leicht, wie es vordem bei uns aussah. Bei dem Besuch der türkischen Provinzialstädte, zumal auf der europäischen Seite, wie vor Jahren in Adrianopel, heute in Monastir, tauchten mir deutlich Bilder aus der Kindheit in der ostpreußischen Heimat auf.... Heut’ ist alles verschwunden; aber erinnert man sich dessen, so fällt der Vergleich für den Orient keineswegs ungünstig aus. Am anderen Morgen um vier Uhr rasselten, wackelten ächzten unsere alten Karossen zur Stadt hinaus, durch die aus dem Schlummer erwachende Ebene. Wie ich zum Wagenfenster hinaussah auf die nebligen bethauten Wiesen und Getreidefelder, uund (sic) ein Chausseebaum nach dem andern rechts und links vorübertaumelte, träumte ich mich unwilkürlich in die ferne Heimath vor 40 Jahren zurück, wenn die Sommerferien zu Ende waren und wir Kinder in die alte Kutsche gepackt, fast ebenso langsam wie hier mit schwerem Herzen die Chaussee entlang rollten, dem Städtchen und der Schule entgegen. 14 (Fuhrmann, deutscher Orient 157)

14 In giving a better picture of Goltz’ worldview, Fuhrman is quoting long excerpts of von der Goltz’ work Ausflug nach Macedonien
Instead of being overwhelmed by the cultural differences and exoticness of his deployment, von der Goltz was almost immediately overcome with visions of an undeveloped East Prussian countryside and the carefree years of childhood. What makes his retrospective visions even more bizarre is the fact that he has been employed by the Ottoman government to modernize the officer corps and prepare them to deal with future conflicts. Von der Goltz’s longing for the past not only had its roots in the aforementioned German tendency to see the modern industrialized world as the exemplification of decadence, but also had to do with the precarious situation of the military in the first years of the German Empire.

The period immediately following the Franco-Prussian war was marked by peace and stability (Furhmann, *Nation Building* 234). Goltz’s carrier therefore was heavily influenced by a lack of military action. While these years of peace and stability were clearly welcomed in most circles, they translated into long periods of restlessness and disappointment for career military men like Goltz.

This restlessness is reflected in his writings on military theory throughout the 1870s and 1880s (Teske 65-68). Despite Germany’s superior military forces and decisive victories over foes in the previous decade, von der Goltz wrote numerous publications calling for vigilance concerning future attacks. Unlike major politicians and businessmen of the day, he believed that vigilance was necessary because western civilization was in a rapid state of decline.¹⁵ He, along with many other theorists in Germany at the time, believed that large empires in Asia would form in the next century, which would be able to challenge the supremacy of European military

¹⁵ Von der Goltz was not alone in his belief that Western Civilization was in rapid decline. Although it was written in the 1920s, Oswald Spengler’s *Decline of the West* is probably the most popular example of Germans predicting the downfall of Western Civilization. Members of the Peaceful Imperialist movement shared the belief that great civilization in Asia would come to overtake the supremacy of Western Civilization.
and cultural hegemony. The rise of Japan and its victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 was in his opinion the first harbinger of things to come for western civilization, which would find itself under constant attack from these new emerging powers.

Moreover, von der Goltz predicted with startling accuracy that wars of the future would not be between two standing armies, but rather would be all-out wars between entire civilizations. These conflicts would not only involve combatants but also directly affect the lives of civilians on both sides. Goltz envisioned these struggles as cataclysmic events that would decide the “fates of entire peoples.” Only those societies that were able to mobilize the entire nation in a coming war would be able to achieve victory. In his seminal work *Das Volk in Waffen* (1883), Goltz described in detail how a nation could prepare its citizens for these new types of conflicts and prepared his students in the Ottoman officer corps accordingly (Nezir Akmese 23-33). This schizophrenic conflict between Goltz’s mission to modernize the officer corps and his fascination with the pre-modern backward state of much of the Empire heavily influenced the official German view of the Empire until the end of the First World War.

The German historian Malte Fuhrmann provides an excellent assessment of the Goltzian view in his work *Der Traum vom deutschen Orient* (2006) He notes:

> Wenn schon die vormoderne Welt der osmanischen Provinz enden müsse, dann sollte sie nicht dem Ideal der Boulevards von Paris geopfert werden, die in der reichsdeutschen Imagination untrennbar mit den angeblichen Schattenseiten der Moderne verbunden waren: moralische Dekadenz und Prostitution, weltanschauliche Beliebigkeit und politischer Radikalismus. Doch das Gegegenmodell zu den Champs Elysées waren nicht die Berliner Linden noch andere Zentren der deutschen Moderne wie Hamburg, das Ruhr- oder das
Maingebiet. Es war die ostpreußische Provinz, die am wenigsten modernisierte Region des Reichs. Der Fortschritt sollte langsam, vorsichtig dosiert Einzug halten und dabei weitgehende Rücksicht auf bestehende Hierarchien und Moralvorstellungen nehmen sowie unkonventionelles Gedankengut möglichst unterdrücken. Dieses konservative, seine Entstehung im Geiste des ostelbischen Junkertums anzumerkende Ideal sollte zum meist nicht hinterfragten deutschen Modernisierungsmodell für das Osmanische Reich werden. (Fuhrmann, *deutscher Orient* 159)

While von der Goltz’s ideals were not challenged by the official German establishment, which for the most part shared his traditional anti-modern mindset, it was clearly refined by Jäckh and the Peaceful Imperialists to address the new push for democratic reform and modernization in the Ottoman Empire after the Young Turk Revolution. The year 1908 not only represented a generational shift in the Ottoman Empire, but also highlighted the emergence of a new liberal minded generation of German Turkophiles who were more interested the exporting of German industrial knowhow than searching for an idealized pre-industrialized world.
CHAPTER III: THE EMERGENCE OF THE PEACEFUL IMPERIALIST APPROACH

After nearly two decades of an ambiguous presence of both the German state and business interests in the region, a new, and for its time relatively unconventional, movement began to take shape vis-à-vis Germany’s relationship to Turkey. Realizing the lack of opportunity to acquire new colonies and Germany’s lack of success in standard colonial undertakings, they looked at Germany’s role in the Ottoman Empire as an example for a specific German approach to imperial undertaking. While they shared some of von der Goltz’s anti-modern sentiments, the men who would take up this cause did not come from the old Prussian aristocracy nor were they adherent to Bismarck’s cautious strategy of Realpolitik. They were men, such as Ernst Jäckh, Freidrich Naumann, and Paul Rohrbach, who came of age in the new empire and were influenced by liberal democratic ideals. Like von der Goltz, they were skeptical about the effects that an industrialized capitalist society would have on traditional völkisch culture, but at the same time did not completely share his apocalyptic vision of Western Civilization coming undone.

While Ernst Jäckh, whose efforts will be discussed in depth in the next section, may have had the most influential and interesting experience, the foundation of the movement and indeed the initial employer of many of the Liberal Imperialists was Friedrich Naumann. Naumann was such an overarching and prominent figure for those involved in the Ottoman Empire that Jäckh would later write in his memoir that his chance encounter with him in 1900 and subsequent collaborative working relationship was the catalyst for all of his efforts over the next twenty years (Jäckh, Goldene Pflug 15).
Naumann’s influence in German political and intellectual circles began when he took a prominent position in Wilhelminian politics in the mid 1890s. In this period he founded the weekly news magazine *Die Hilfe* which would later feature articles by Jäckh and many of the other figures involved in the Peaceful Imperialist efforts in the Ottoman Empire. Additionally, he founded the National Social Association, a political party which looked to address similar social issues as the SPD while maintaining a more pronounced nationalistic stance. As a liberal minded and pragmatic political thinker, Naumann believed that the only way to effectively combat reactionary and extreme capitalist forces in German society was through the creation of some type of national socialist front (Schubert 6).

It was in the creation of this new political stance, a synthesis of social democratic principles and nationalistic ideals, that the Peaceful Imperialist movement found its intellectual foundation. Naumann, along with other prominent Germans such as Max Weber, expanded on the idea of a national socialistic front and sought to develop economic integration between Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and other areas further east.

On the surface, Naumann’s views seemed paradoxical in a time when growing nationalistic and ethnic tensions were tearing apart the old Empires in Europe and the Middle East. On the one hand, he supported a strong national socialist program based on a Westphalian nation state model. On the other, he called for greater economic integration between Germany and nations in Central Europe. Despite the apparent contradictions in Naumann’s concept, it must be understood within the framework of integrating the failing and highly unstable Austria-

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16 Naumann’s original National-Social Association failed in elections in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It eventually dissolved. Its remnants however formed the DDP (German Democratic Party) after the Second World War.

17 While Weber supported a Liberal Imperialist movement, he supported Naumann’s notion of Mitteleuropa mainly because it would provide a suitable solution to the problem of Polish workers in Germany’s Eastern territories. (See Max Weber and German Politics 217)
Hungarian Empire into the German sphere of influence. Naumann was clearly looking for a way to integrate economies and create a supranational political institution while at the same time attempting to please the nationalist aspiration of the various groups in Central Europe.

Recognizing the structural weaknesses of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the potential for a new large empire or confederation to emerge out of its ashes, Naumann began advocating a confederation between Germany, the various states of the Habsburg monarchy and a reconstituted Poland (Johnson 165-167). Germany, of course, would be the driving economic and political force behind this new confederation, which would include all the ethnic groups of the former Habsburg Empire. During the First World War, Naumann formulated these ideas in his seminal work *Mitteleuropa* (1915). In the first pages of the book, Naumann warns of the dangers of Germany being disconnected from *Mitteleuropa*. Once the war began, Naumann saw his concept not as an aspiration for future economic and political integration, but rather a necessity to consolidate Germany’s defense. He writes:

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\[18\] The term Mitteleuropa is historically loaded. When Germans of the period were speaking of Mitteleuropa, it included Germany, the territory of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (including some peripheral border areas), and the Baltic states. Switzerland is geographically in Mitteleuropa, but was not included in any of the political concepts for unification.
Ungarn allein sich wehren sollte! Das geht nicht mehr. Das ist vorbei. Darum ist der mitteleuropäische Bund kein Zufall, sondern eine Notwendigkeit (Naumann, 4).

Naumann cleverly tried to promote his idea of a unified *Mitteleuropa* at a time when cooperation between the war time allies, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire, was at its highest. Naumann’s concept of a free economic zone in Central Europe seems revolutionary and in many ways corresponds to structural changes that are only now taking place in this region at the start of the twenty first century. His position, however, was clearly naïve when one considers the power of nationalist aspirations in dividing people and creating mono-ethnic nation states in the early twentieth century. Naumann seemed oblivious to the fact that the main event, which set the First World War in motion, the assassination of Franz Ferdinand and his wife by a Serbian nationalist during a visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina, was itself a sign of the breakdown of multi-ethnic cooperation and coexistence. Furthermore, he provides little evidence of how one could unify the seemingly incompatible ideas of ethnic nationalism and supranational political and economic institutions. Despite these inconsistencies, Naumann’s work was very popular in the German speaking world. Naumann’s belief that Germany would lead a federation of states that would extend from northern Germany and the Low Countries all the way to the Balkans and the edge of the Ottoman Empire was taken seriously at the time, especially among the public. While these war goals may seem incredible now, especially considering the high level of instability in Austria-Hungary and the Balkans, the ideas enjoyed wide support as a viable war aim and method to ensure Germany’s future economic and cultural expansion.

The logical extension of the *Mitteleuropa* strategy was to expand Germany’s influence further east towards the Mediterranean and Dardanelle straits. When Jäckh and other Peaceful
Imperialists talked about the transit and trade connection “Berlin-Baghdad,” they were not just visualizing a direct rail connection from Germany to Baghdad, but rather a strategic alliance and trade partnership that would give Germany unfettered access to military and trade routes from the North Sea coast all the way to the Persian Gulf. This access would block Russian expansion into the Mediterranean and provide a more efficient overland trade route to Asia than the British controlled Suez Canal. As a result, control of Mitteleuropa and the trade routes extending from it became a question of highest priority for German imperialist strategists.

If Germany were to succeed in controlling Mitteleuropa and in building a strategic alliance in the Ottoman Empire, Germany would most certainly have its “Platz in der Sonne” and be classified as a world power on par with the British and French. Thus, the Peaceful Imperialist strategy in the Middle East developed alongside of and complemented the notion of German hegemony in Mitteleuropa. While the majority of the German forces fought on the Western and Eastern fronts during the First World War, the Peaceful Imperialists, under the leadership of Ernst Jäckh, were looking to mold the Ottoman Empire into an ally and set the stage for Germany to become a world power once the conflict had ended.

While the concept of “Peaceful Imperialism” might seem benign in a late nineteenth century context, it would be wrong to give the Germans undeserved credit for developing some type of benign imperialism. The Germans, like all other European powers of the time, were looking to consolidate their power and expand their area of influence. This concept had great appeal to many German nationalists, including those from the more liberal segments of the society, primarily because it provided Germany with a chance to reach parity with the other great powers, and not because they were specifically against European interference in the affairs of other nations.
In many ways, the ideas of these “Peaceful Imperialists” are very modern. They advocated a policy similar to that employed by many modern states in nation building processes in a postcolonial context. Like many modern states, the “Peaceful Imperialists” viewed direct colonial possession of territories as burdensome. The transfer of ideas, training of foreign armies, and economic growth, were a far more viable asset to a great power than any colony (Fuhrman, *Nation Building* 241). When compared to soft power imperialist approaches in a modern context, such as the methods employed by the United States in the second half of the twentieth century, the main difference in the German case is that its version of soft power imperialism developed out of a position of weakness and not out of strength. Germans were practicing soft power imperialism not as a world superpower trying to downplay its official involvement, but rather as an aspiring world power using it as a means to compensate for its inability to partake in the typical colonial acquisition process in the Ottoman Empire.

The movement came into full force in 1909, when its most important member, Ernst Jäckh, published his first work on the region, *Der Aufsteigende Halbmond* (Jäckh, *Crescent* 6). The next section of this work will examine Jäckh’s experience as the main proponent of the German Peaceful Imperialist strategy in the region.
CHAPTER IV: A FREELANCE AMBASSADOR IN TURKEY

For a man who would have so much influence on German policy towards the Ottoman Empire in the crucial years leading up to and during the First World War, Jäckh seemed like an unlikely candidate based on his occupation as a newspaper editor before becoming interested in the region. Furthermore, he had little or no background knowledge of the area and no formal training as a scholar of the Middle East. In his memoirs, he did not contest his lack of qualifications and admitted that luck and happenstance had put him in the right place and right moment to witness the Ottoman Empire in a period of great change and excitement (Jäckh, Goldende Pflug 120).

His initial interest in the region was actually sparked by two events that were not directly related to a field of interest or his occupation. A simple pleasure cruise that took him from the French port of Marseilles to the coast of Asia Minor conjured up romantic notions of the Orient, and especially of the visit of the Persian Shah, Nassir Ed-Din during his childhood in 1885 (120). His first encounter with the region clearly demonstrated the limit of his relevant subject knowledge and his clear interest in the Turkish cause over that of the preservation of the Ottoman Empire. Jäckh freely admitted his naivety in his memoirs and stated that he encountered
some problems even before he reached the Ottoman Empire. While trying to procure the proper visas back in Germany, he noted:

   Als ich 1908 in Smyrna zum erstenmal die türkische Küste Kleinasiens betrat,
   dieses mittelmeerischen Mittel-Landes zwischen Abend- und Morgen- land, des
   einstigen „Hauptlandes des aktivsten griechischen Geistes“, war ich ein
   sogenannter „gebildeter Europäer“, ein “Akademiker”, der alsbald einsehen
   mußte, daß er höchst ungebildet war in allem, was die „Türkei“ anging oder so
   genannt wurde. Das war meine erste Überraschung gewesen- schon in
   Deutschland, als ich um ein türkisches Visum zu erhalten, ein „türkisches
   Konsulat zu finden suchte und entdecken mußte, daß es nirgends in der Welt
   „türkische“ Konsuln oder Botschafter oder Visen gab, sondern nur „osmanische“
   Diplomaten und Beamte und Visen des „Osmanischen Reiches“. Das
   fälschlicherweise „die Türkei“ genannt wurde. (120)

   While Jäckh openly admitted his ignorance of that fact that he required an Ottoman visa
   instead of a Turkish one, this honest mistake was actually quite indicative of his overall view of
   the region and would shape his approach to the German-Turkish relationship. As the research
   will show, Jäckh was already looking beyond the Ottoman Empire and its multinational
   institutions from the beginning of his mission to promote German influence in the Middle East.
   Anatolia, in Jäckh’s mind, was first and foremost a Turkish homeland. The new state structure
   that would emerge would be clearly dominated by the Turks, the prized “Volk” of Ottoman
   society. The Turks, like the Germans in *Mitteleuropa*, had the job of acculturating other peoples
   in their respective domains and were the only logical partner for the Germans in the region.
   According to Jäckh’s strategy of German penetration, the Ottoman Empire was not to undergo
“Germanization” or “Colonization”, but rather a thorough “Turkisation” with help and support from the Germans. Moreover, his comment about Anatolia being the “einstige Hauptland des aktivsten greichischen Geistes”, also clearly misrepresented the multi-national reality of Ottoman life and the fact that thousands of Greeks and other Christians remained an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Empire at the time of his visit in 1908. As Bismarck had stated earlier, Jäckh made clear in his memoirs that the Turks were “the only true Gentlemen in the Orient” and the future of the Empire depended on them and not external forces (122). The main objective of the Germans was, therefore, to aid the Turks in establishing authority and modernizing their domain.

Jäckh arrived in the Ottoman Empire at a time of great excitement and instability in 1908. Earlier that year, the Young Turk Revolution had brought the status quo in Ottoman society into question. The revolutionary movement, led by the Committee of Union and Progress, had forced the Sultan to reinstitute the parliament, which had been disbanded in 1878. During the period of Jäckh’s first visit, there was widespread hope that this revolution could lead to widespread institutional reform and modernization. For the first time, the Ottoman Empire seemed to be looking toward the future instead of preserving outdated institutional structures. Clearly wanting to get a firsthand impression of the people and the political developments, Jäckh used his political connections to Friedrich Naumann to gain access to officials at the German Embassy in Istanbul. While trying to gain entrance into the Embassy during his first visit in 1908, Jäckh was initially turned back by a servant of the Ambassador. Disappointed, Jäckh was leaving the area surrounding the Embassy when someone hurriedly approached him and explained that he indeed was invited to speak with the Ambassador. As on many other occasions in his life, fate seemed to intervene on his behalf. This first meeting with Ambassador Kinderlen-Wächter, which almost
never took place, was pivotal in provided Jäckh with the initial contacts with influential members of the Young Turk Revolution (Jäckh, *Goldene Pflug* 123).

In fact, the meeting not only allowed Jäckh to meet various elite figures in the Ottoman Empire, but also provided him with connections to Germans who had an intimate knowledge of the region. One such figure, Hans Humann, who arguably may have been the most important intermediary between the Ottoman and German government, provided him with access to the highest levels of the Ottoman state. Humann, whose father had been director of the Oriental Museum in Berlin, spent much of his childhood in the Ottoman Empire and spoke fluent Turkish. He was extremely close to Enver Pasha and provided Jäckh with the necessary support to understand and make contacts in the Empire (Jäckh, *Rising Crescent* 120). Without his help, Jäckh never would have been able to meet such a wide range of important people. His memoirs, which contain numerous letters between Humann and himself, are also a testament to the importance of Humann in facilitating Jäckh’s work. Looking back on his time in Turkey, Jäckh noted in 1944:

> Humann and I worked together to help our Turkish friends build up an independent Turkish nation. He placed his official and personal contacts, including his wireless apparatus, at my disposal, and I collaborated with him as a “free-lance ambassador” (120).

It is important here to note the use of the expression “free-lance ambassador.” Jäckh’s initial efforts in the Ottoman Empire, while aided from high level political connections, were done on his own initiative. Even when he later took on a more official role during the First World War, he was not always acting on behalf of the government and at certain times would become a distraction to official state policy.
Rehabilitating the Image of the Turks: The Gentlemen of the Orient

Jäckh’s early writings were as much a personal travel log as they were political propaganda. His goal was not only to convince policy makers of the Ottoman Empire’s importance, but also to rehabilitate the image of the Ottoman Empire and the Turks within educated circles in Germany.

As a promoter of the future of Turkey in early twentieth century Germany, Jäckh had to contend with a plethora of stereotypes and negative associations. While many German strategists were eager to exploit the geo-strategic military and economic opportunities offered by the Ottoman Empire’s unparalleled geographic location, they, along with the general public, were still highly skeptical of the Turks as people. As was mentioned earlier in this research project, the Turks had been seen as the quintessential other and enemy for centuries. The two sieges of Vienna coupled with Ottoman aggression and expansion in the Balkans had firmly solidified the image of the Turk as a belligerent heathen. More recent developments in the nineteenth century also did not provide Jäckh with much of a basis for creating a positive image. For example, the Ottoman State, which was controlled by the Turkic ruling class, found itself in conflicts with nearly every Christian group in its imperial holdings at some point in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. The Greeks and the Serbians were able to break free from Ottoman domination in the early part of the nineteenth century, but other Christian peoples in the Balkans remained engaged in bitter nationalistic struggles with the Ottoman State. During the period in which Jäckh was writing, many of the readers of his works would have been aware of several Ottoman Turkish massacres against Bulgarians and Armenians, which left thousands dead. Moreover, the Empire had been associated with economic and political stagnation for well over
two centuries. Its culture was defined in Europe by the exoticness and perceived immoral practice of the “Harem” as well as the backwardness of its institutions. Despite this uphill battle, Jäckh promoted the future prospects for a Turkish-Ottoman state with the same vigor that had allowed him to make so many contacts in Turkey and would later carry his career to the highest circles in both Europe and North America.

Without any firm historical basis for his promotion of a German-Turkish relationship, he started this process by addressing negative stereotypes about the Turks. While some of the stereotypes and visual descriptions of Ottoman cultural may seem somewhat superfluous to the modern reader, Jäckh was explaining differences between two cultures in a time before modern technology made the mass distributions of images possible. Despite the interest many of his readers had in the subject matter, most had only a limited knowledge of the Middle East. In order to present Turks as civilized and a future partner in the Middle East, Jäckh looked to explain the reasons why Turks acted differently in everyday life. In this passage, Jäckh noted the differences in attire and eating habits. He stated:

> In Europa ist es unschicklich, mit dem Hute auf dem Kopfe und ohne Schuhe in Gesellschaft zu erscheinen. – in der Türkei gilt es für unanständig, mit entblößtem Kopfe und mit unvollkommen reiner Fußbekleidung das Zimmer zu betreten. Der Europäer schilt den Türken unsauber, weil er das Fleisch wie das Brot mit der Hand zum Mund führt- der Türke hält es nicht für rein, vor und nach Tisch das Waschen von Mund und Hand zu unterlassen” (Jäckh, Aufsteigende Halbmond 23)

Jäckh also took time to ensure the readers that most of the Turks that he met lived in family settings that were very similar to those of Central Europe. Jäckh took particular pride in the fact
that he was able to enter the homes of many Ottoman Muslims, which according to him was reserved only for the most honorable of non-Muslim foreigners. While he made some prejudicial remarks that were typical of a western observer from the period, he stressed that he had been treated with respect and that the Turks had freed themselves from many of the customs that had made them appear foreign to those in Western Europe. He noted, for example, that the institution of the “Harem” existed more in the European imagination than in reality. Despite the reluctance of many to introduce the female members of the family to outsiders, Jäckh noted that Ottoman family structure was not that different from those in Western Europe. Moreover, Jäckh addressed the perceived fatalism that many in the West had come to associate with the stagnate Ottoman Empire and its official religion of Islam. The Young Turk Revolution had in his mind awakened the Empire out of its centuries of stagnation and decline. The Ottoman Empire was going through a period of great transition and would emerge as a powerful force on the world stage.

In addition to the aforementioned topics, Jäckh chose some unconventional methods in his attempt to portray the Turks as the true “Gentlemen of the Orient.” In many of his early works and even in his memoirs, he focuses specifically on the position of women in society. The treatment of this topic was, in part, undoubtedly inspired by his fascination with the perceived exoticness of women concealed in traditional Moslem attire, but it nonetheless provided the reader with an interesting interpretation of the role of woman in Ottoman society. Jäckh noted the amazing differences between the roles of various women in society. He made clear that almost every aspect of society, including the role of women, was brought into question by the outbreak of the Young Turk Revolution. While much of the female population retained traditional Moslem attire, there were clearly signs that the Young Turk Revolution was transforming their role in society, and Jäckh was keen to use this development to promote the
image of a modern nation emerging from a long period of stagnation. In 1908, at the outset of the Young Turk Revolution, Jäckh experienced both extremes. While visiting the Turkish section of the city of Smyrna (now Izmir), he wrote:

"da tauchen wohl zwanzig Schritte vor mir ohne mich zu sehen, einige ganz Schwarz vermummte Gestalten auf, im hüllenden Gewand unsres Domino, nur die Maske über den Kopf zurückgeworfen: türkische Frauen und Mädchen. Jetzt bemerken sie mich: ein vielstimmiger Schrei – die grobe Maske wird vors Gesicht gerissen, die erschreckten Körper machen kehrt – und weg fliehen sie wie Aussätzige; machen dann wieder halt und winken drohend mich weg" (Jäckh Goldene Pflug 141)

During the same year, however, he was just as surprised to witness the exact opposition extreme concerning the role of woman in society. As he was on a ship in the harbor of Istanbul, he was witness to the following.

"Auf der Kapitänsbrücke steht eine türkische Dame, das feine Gesicht maskenfrei, entschleiert, und hielt vor hundert fremden Männern und Frauen eine Ansprache in Türkisch, Französich und Englisch und feiert die nationale Wiedergeburt des türkischen Volkes und die Befreiung auch der türkischen Frau aus den Schleier- und Haremsbanden, damit auch die Frauen schaffende Kräfte im Dienste des Vaterlandes werden können. (141)

Jäckh was convinced that the Young Turk Revolution would provide female equality in society and allow women to take on an active role alongside their male counterparts. Moreover, within a Turkish household, Jäckh had experienced the dominant role of older women in controlling and managing household activities. He was very impressed with the amount of respect women were
being given behind closed doors, and believed that Turkish women would be well suited to take on leadership position once the revolution had granted them full freedom. On the whole, Jäckh seemed to have been thoroughly impressed with Turkish women and their chances to contribute to the society as a whole in the future.

Interestingly, while travelling with Ottoman forces during an insurrection in the Ottoman province of Albania, Jäckh had the following to say about the women of the insurgent Albanians. He noted:

*Dieses Frauenhaus finde ich häufig außerhalb der geschützten Kula, neben dem Männerhaus, manchmal durch einen Steg mit diesem verbunden. Dort draußen hausen die Frauen bei einander, vom Mann und Bruder und Vater, in patriarchalischer Gemeinschaft- dort in der gleichen Freiheit wie der Viehstall ... Weib und Tier* (Jäckh, Durch Albanien 97)

Jäckh continued the harsh depiction of Albanian women as only a „Mittel zum Zweck der Zucht” and took particular note of their apparent ugliness. He stated,

*Kein Grußwort habe ich je einen Albaner einer uns begegnenden Frau bieten hören, ob sie weniger hässlich ist oder mehr: meist sind sie ja verbraucht und zerrieben, verrunzelt und verwelkt, wenigstens im Gebirge; und man mag sich über de erotische Glut der albanischen Liebespoesie verwundern angesichts solcher “Schönen“* (Jäckh, Durch Albanien 97)

While it is possible that Jäckh was giving an accurate description of what he witnessed, it seems very convenient that he was so enthralled by the power and aspirations of equality for Turkish women in the central part of the Empire while at the same time being so disgusted by the Albanians. One has to wonder whether Jäckh’s pro-Turkish policy was behind the depictions of Albanian women.
Defining the German-Turkish Relationship in a Crumbling Empire

If one subscribes to the old saying “timing is everything,” then one would have to believe that timing played a crucial role in the success of Jäckh’s promotion of the German-Turkish relationship. After his initial visit in 1908, during the Young Turk Revolution, the Empire was in a constant state of flux with new developments taking place on all fronts until its dissolution at the end of the First World War.

Jäckh’s promotion of a German-Turkish, as opposed to a German-Ottoman relationship, could not have found more fertile ground for reception than in the crucial years between 1908 and the start of the First World War in 1914. Despite the initial hopes of a reorganization of the multi-ethnic Empire through reforms implemented by the Young Turk Revolution, the final stage of the Empire’s dissolution actually began in that same year of 1908. In October, Bulgaria officially declared its independence. This was followed the next morning by Austria-Hungary’s official annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina. In 1910, popular uprisings broke out in Albania, a province that was already separated from the Asian heart of the Empire on the other side of the Balkans. Again, seizing the moment, Jäckh used his connection to accompany the Turkish army on this expedition, where even he realized that the Empire had little ability to project its power to such a distant place.

The situation continued to worsen for the besieged Empire. In 1911, the Italians, sensing the collapse of Ottoman authority, successfully attacked and held three Ottoman provinces in what is modern day Libya. Jäckh again used this opportunity to develop a deeper relationship with Enver Pasha who had been deployed to lead Turkish forces in the battle. Enver was an outspoken admirer of German militarism and had been the Ottoman military attaché in Berlin
before entering the conflict. Enver spoke German well and communicated his experiences in the
war to Jäckh via his close friend Hans Humann.

Adding insult to injury, this defeat at the hands of the Italians was quickly followed by
the start of the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 in which the Empire faced a combined force of the
various nations of the Balkans in a concerted effort to take the Empires last footholds in the
region. Once again, the Ottoman forces were unable to stop the imminent collapse of their
Empire and performed poorly in the conflict. Macedonia and Albania were lost, and with that the
Ottomans had effectively been pushed out of the Balkans, which they ruled for centuries.

The poor military performance was especially troubling for the Germans who had been
training the Ottoman forces for the last three decades. German historian Fritz Fischer noted:

the unexpected victories of the Balkan states in Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece over
Turkey in the First Balkan War of 1912, following Italy’s success in Tripoli a
year before, created an impression, especially in Paris that German armaments
and strategy had suffered a considerable reverse…. People talked of “Creuzot’s
victory over Krupp (Fischer 31).

Undeterred by the setbacks, Jäckh continued his strong activism for the Turks. During these
crucial years, however, Jäckh began to reformulate his position for the future of the region. With
the European holdings in the Balkan Peninsula a thing of the past, the focus shifted towards the
creation of a mono-ethnic Turkic nation state in the Anatolian heartland. Although Jäckh had
always been first and foremost a champion of the Turkish cause, he initially believed that the
Young Turk Revolution would be able to provide the groundwork for modern state institutions.
An analysis of Jäckh’s correspondence shows that he still believed that the revitalization of the
military and its institutions could provide the basis for reform as late as September of 1911 (Alex
Ular to Jäckh, Ernst Jaeckh Papers). Three years later, while writing political propaganda in support of his Turkish allies during the First World War, Jäckh portrayed the Balkan wars as something, which actually benefited the Turks. He remarked:

Die politische Lage der Türkei nach dem Balkankrieg ist günstiger als vorher. Die Türkei hat im Balkenkrieg Land verloren und Menschen gewonnen. (eine Million mohammedanischer Rückwanderer für Kleinasien); sie hat an Zersplitterung verloren und sie hat an Sammlung gewonnen (Jäckh Waffenbrüderschaft, 21).

Jäckh’s focus on the development of a Turkish nation state was also reflected in the thinking of the Turkish elite in the Empire. The defeats in the Balkans and North Africa had helped solidify the development of a unique Turkish national consciousness, which had been developing since the late nineteenth century with the activism of Turkish nationalists such as Ziya Gökalp. While the German influence alone did not create this Turkish identity, it certainly helped facilitate the idea that a mono-ethnic nation state was the best method to modernize and improve a society.

Despite the inability of von der Goltz to reorganize the army and Jäckh’s overly optimistic expectations at the start of the Young Turk Revolution, the Germans and their quick ascension to world supremacy in the nineteenth century served as a model for the future among segments of the Turkish elite. Within a generation Germans had gone from being divided into small states, which could not adequately project their power globally, to a world industrial juggernaut that was capable of building state of the art railway projects such as the Baghdad and Hedjaz railways. One member of the Ottoman elite, Enver Pasha, was particularly fascinated by the Germans’ rapid rise to power. He became an outspoken enthusiast of the German model and vigorously promoted deeper connections to Germany after he rose to the position of Minister of War. After the defeats in the Balkan Wars, he also saw the creation of a mono-ethnic state as the
best method to solidify the future of the Turks. Enver envisioned a Pan-Turkic Empire that stretched across the Caucasus into Central Asia as the future mission of the ruling Turkish class of the Ottoman establishment. The Arabs, Armenians, and Greeks would have no place in this new Empire. It would be a Turkic nation for Turkmen.\(^{19}\)

If anyone profited from the chaotic situation and slow disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, it was definitely Jäckh. The uncertainty of the moment gave a relatively obscure figure like Jäckh, who arrived with a few political contacts and a limited knowledge of the region, the opportunity to develop intimate relationships with people who otherwise may have been reluctant to consult with a foreigner from the West only a decade before. His relationships to Enver, Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), and others were as much a result of his uncanny ability to engage people as it was a sign of their desperation to look for methods to redefine the nature of their own crumbling state and identity. Looking back at this part of his life, Jäckh noted in his memoirs:

ALLE POLITIK IST PSYCHOLOGIE; EINFÜHLUNG, HINEINDENKEN, IN ANDERE; ÜBERZEUGEN, NICHt ÜBERREDEN; KLÄRUNG AUCH GEGENÜBER DER FREMDESTEN ERScheinUNG; EINE PHANTASIE, SICH VORZUSTELLEN, WELCHE GEISTIGE UND SEESELICHE REAKTION EIGENE WORTE UND HANDLUNGEN IN ANDEREN AUSlöSEN, DENEN SIE GELTEN, DENEN SIE SOGAR GESetz WERDEN sollen (Jäckh, Goldene Pflug 176).

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\(^{19}\) Enver pursued these Pan-Turkic goals at the end of the First World War. He was ultimately killed in battle by Russian forces in 1921 while trying to realize his dream of a Pan-Turkic Empire.
CHAPTER V: THE GERMAN-TURKISH ASSOCIATION

“Es ist immer wichtiger, an die “Führer” heranzukommen, um sie zu überzeugen, als an die Geführten, um sie zu überreden: das letztere ist bequem, das erstere aber entscheidend.”

- Ernst Jäckh, *Der Goldene Pflug* (1911)\(^{20}\)

As was discussed earlier, Jäckh’s outgoing personality and analysis of the Ottoman Empire allowed him to make contacts at the highest levels of both the German and Ottoman governments. While he appreciated the access to such people, it alone was not enough to ensure the intensive German involvement in the development of a modern Turkish state that he had envisioned. Looking for other methods to ensure German involvement both with and without the aid of the German government, Jäckh was trying to form an organization that could promote the type of intense bilateral relationship he desired. One of the first steps taken to make the growing German-Turkish partnership a reality was an educational journey for members of the Ottoman elite through Germany in 1911 (Jäckh, *Goldene Pflug* 211). Having already enjoyed a high level of respect from prominent members of the Ottoman ruling class, the trip allowed him to build an even deeper relationship with key members of the government.

In 1912, Jäckh, Hans Humann, and the well respected German Orientalist Hugo Grothe were able to gain enough support and finances from various circles to begin work on a German language secondary school that was modeled after a similar undertaking in the German colony of Tsingtau in China (Klosterhuis 596-597). Although this initial project showed much promise, it was blocked by the German Embassy in Constantinople. At this juncture, Jäckh parted ways with Grothe and subsequently began to work on a similar project. This new project had more support from German officials and focused on the development of German schools at the primary school

\(^{20}\) Although the quote was originally made in 1911, it is being cited from page 184 in a series of quotes in *Der Goldene Pflug: Lebensernte eines Weltbürgers* (1954)
level (597). With Grothe out of the picture, Jäckh became the main figure and intermediary between officials and the realization of such projects on the ground. The first of these schools, which Jäckh was to have built and organized, was located in the city of Konia.

Konia was located in the interior of Anatolia and was a stop along the finished segment of the German sponsored Baghdad railway. The Germans were conducting vast irrigation projects in the area, which, according to German propaganda, would turn the entire region in the “bread basket” of the Anatolia. This project, however, also fell victim to internal pressures at the German Embassy in Constantinople. As the reader can gather from the responses that Jäckh was receiving from officials, the German establishment was far from certain on how to proceed in such a volatile and risky situation, not knowing whether projects like Jäckh’s plan to build German schools or the controversial Baghdad railway were worth political and possible economic isolation among the European powers. Jäckh, of course, was undeterred by the risk of German isolation in international politics and viewed the Anatolian peninsula as an integral part of Germany’s new sphere of influence in the future. After much haggling with Embassy officials, the German government decided not to disregard Jäckh’s efforts entirely and supported the building of a school in the city of Adana, which the German Embassy believed to be a more valuable asset for German interests.

Thus, after much confusion and countless hours of promoting the German-Turkish relationship, Jäckh was granted 25,000 Reichsmarks and was given the green light to proceed with the initial project in Adana with the help of local German consular officials (600). Despite governmental support of this project, officials were not looking to fund Jäckh’s German-Turkish endeavors in the future and left the financing of such projects up to Jäckh. As one would expect, Jäckh took up this cause with the same vigor and energy with which he had promoted the Turks
over the previous years. Jäckh used his contacts within German business and political circles to seek out funds to build German educational institutions in the Ottoman Empire. His success was remarkable. By early 1914, less than six months after had received the initial 25,000 M, Jäckh had already amassed a sum of 400,000 M. (600-01).

Jäckh’s initial efforts to raise funds and seek out supporters were given an even further boost when his close confidant, Enver Pasha, was appointed Minster of War in early 1914. Jäckh now had unimpeded access to the highest levels of both governments, and most importantly, finally had someone at the highest levels of the Ottoman government who actively supported his notion of German “Kulturarbeit.” With such a high level contact, it seemed that Jäckh would enjoy the highest level of cooperation and have the opportunity to build a partnership that would help ensure a German presence in many of the Empire’s institution over the years to come. This initial partnership, however, was short lived. Events that summer in Sarejevo set off a chain reaction that would not only change the nature of the burgeoning German-Turkish partnership, but also the course of world history.

The First World War and the German-Turkish Association

The First World War was a make or break moment for the German-Turkish relationship and the career of its most vocal supporter, Ernst Jäckh. Had the Turks remained neutral or even entered the war on the side of the Entente powers, then supporters of the Turks, such as Jäckh and von der Goltz, would have suffered an embarrassing personal defeat. Furthermore, this would have provided Germany with one less outlet to attack both British and Russian interests in the region. Luckily, for the sake of their careers and overall German military strategy, Enver
Pasha, an outspoken admirer of Germany, was making many of the important decisions in Istanbul.

Despite his clear pro-German tendencies, Enver had additional motivations for entering the war on the side of the Germans. As was pointed out earlier, the Empire had suffered a series of defeats in the years directly leading up to the First World War. Despite some success in the Second Balkan War, the Ottoman military establishment was completely dejected and welcomed an opportunity to rectify their misfortune in recent military engagements. Minister of War Enver was particularly ready for a chance to reestablish the honor of the military. He noted:

the only thing that gives me courage to walk in this uniform amongst people and that fills me with excitement is the feeling of revenge and the hope in the future embedded in the youth of the nation and its army (Aksme 166).

After initially declaring neutrality, the Ottomans slowly warmed up to the idea of siding with one of the European power blocs in the war. Despite considerable opposition at the highest levels, Enver Pasha was successful in convincing enough officials in the Sublime Porte to support an alliance with Germany, which quickly became a reality that October (184-5). Although the initial support of the Germans was short of an official war declaration, the Ottoman government had allowed German vessels into the Dardanelles. The German ships were quickly engaged by Russian naval forces, which immediately declared war on the Ottoman Empire in order to protect its naval interests in the Black Sea.

Jäckh suddenly found himself in a position of importance. As a man who had intimate knowledge of the Empire and its leaders, he and his work on promoting German involvement in the transformation of Ottoman society suddenly became a priority for German strategic planners looking to strengthen an important ally. Jäckh’s German-Turkish association, which had begun
in 1912, was now considered an ideal organization through which the German influence in a theater of war and future sphere of influence could be maintained.

In this period, Jäckh began to make impassioned speeches and spent countless hours writing articles in support of the necessity of German involvement now that the Ottoman Empire had become an ally. He remarked:

\[
\text{Die Ausfuhr geistiger Güter sollen wir beginnen, um Herz und Verstand der einheimischen Bevölkerung an uns zu fesseln. Jeder Osmane, der unsere Sprache spricht, der deutsche Bücher liest, der in einem deutschen Spital Genesung fand, wird ein Freund unserer Kultur, ein Abnehmer deutscher Waren} \ (606).
\]

He travelled tirelessly throughout the war years in both Germany and the Ottoman Empire to further expand his cause. Whether as a professor of Turkish studies in Berlin, giving impassioned speeches in every corner of the German Empire, or solidifying contacts within the Ottoman Empire, Jäckh was using his uncanny interpersonal skills to further his cause at a prodigious rate. In the middle of the war, Jäckh was able to increase membership in his German-Turkish Association “over 100 percent from approximately 2,200 members to 4,500 members” (608). These members, some of whom were among the most influential people in Germany, such as Robert Bosch, were also making sizable contribution to Jäckh’s attempt at soft power German penetration. Thus, an organization that had started with almost no capital for its projects had amassed more than 560,000 Reichsmark by 1917 (610).

German Soft Power Imperialism in Action

Jäckh’s success on the ground in the Ottoman Empire, while not as extraordinary as his fund raising talents on the home front, was also substantial. During the war years, nearly twenty
German schools were built and filled with the necessary teaching personal. In addition to this, Jäckh was able to obtain apprenticeships for over seven hundred Ottomans in various trades in Germany and allied Austria-Hungary (620-624). In both Germany and the Ottoman Empire, language courses were provided to increase the number of people with language competence to support the new alliance. As a long time newspaper editor, Jäckh also facilitated the development of the Deutsche-Orient Bücherei and several newspaper outlets to facilitate research and publications that advocated a deeper German involvement in the region. On certain occasions, actors and entire theater ensembles were hired to perform the German classics in major Ottoman cities. The theater groups would in Jäckh’s mind help show the Ottoman elite the superiority of German culture (Weber 194).

While much of the support came in the form of cultural exchange, Jäckh’s organization also supported hospitals and clinics to give the Ottoman population a more tangible benefit from the German presence (Kloosterhuis 623). In a time when states still looked to acquire large Empires, Jäckh’s grass-roots, semi-official efforts to forge an alliance come across as being very modern and useful in a twenty first century geo-political setting. Despite the fact that Jäckh was operating in a wartime environment, he realized the necessity of soft power diplomacy in winning the “hearts and minds” of potential allies long before the struggles of the late twentieth century made such phrases household expressions. In the second half of the twentieth century, the United States used similar methods of soft power to exert its control over various regions of interest. In Latin America, for example, the United States made use of the so-called school of the Americas in the state of Georgia to train and solidify ties with an entire generation of Latin American military officers.21 While it would be presumptuous to claim that Jäckh’s efforts in

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the Ottoman Empire provided some type of foundation for United States policy a generation later, his thinking was clearly a precursor to modern nation building and imperialist strategy. His notion of having a limited official presence, which is then supplemented by an array of political and cultural organizations, clearly has applications in today’s world.

Despite Jäckh’s amazing ability to raise funds and the reasonable amount of success of his efforts in the Ottoman Empire, his organization also faced serious challenges. First, it was operating in a time of great political and financial uncertainty. The funds he had raised, while substantial for the period, were not enough to cover the cost of his operations after 1917 (610-11). Furthermore, not everyone shared Jäckh’s enthusiasm about the German-Turkish partnership. He had a particularly bad relationship with many of the German business owners and entrepreneurs who were making their living in the trading centers of the Ottoman Empire. This mutual distrust between Jäckh and other Germans present in the Empire at times extended to the highest levels in the German Embassy and military establishment. Furthermore, his unconditional support of the Turks was surely of no help to many of the diplomats conducting high level diplomacy in the region, and it most certainly made the relationship with other major powers extremely difficult. Despite the fact that many in the German establishment did not share his vision of a thriving Turkey, he was clearly worth tolerating. His access to important players in the Ottoman establishment along with his ability to promote German interests clearly outweighed the negative repercussion in the middle of a life and death struggle during the First World War.

Jäckh’s relationship with members of the German military mission in the Empire was also not always one of mutual respect and admiration. In recalling Jäckh’s presence and work in the Ottoman Empire, Joseph Pomiankowski, the Austrian Field Marshal, made clear that “It was
significant that German officers used to express their relief whenever Professor Jackh had left Constantinople for home” (Jäckh, Rising Crescent 139). These differences naturally arose from Jäckh’s unrealistic vision of Turkey being a key ally in “a League of Nations within a greater central Europe.” He was completely convinced of the importance of Turkey for Germany’s future position in the world and seemed to take little notice of the volatile situation around him in the Empire. Embassy officials and businessmen alike believed that Jäckh was so concerned with portraying the Turks as a blossoming nation that he failed to take into account actual German interests. In his comprehensive diplomatic history of the period, Frank G. Weber provided an excellent example of how Jäckh’s vision of Turkey came into direct conflict with the reality of the situation on the ground. This particular incident occurred when Jäckh had organized a presentation of a German drama to an audience of Turks. Weber notes:

But the presentation of a German drama, which Jaeckh extolled as not only diverting but also morally elevating, was a ridiculous fiasco. The sacred texts of Goethe and Schiller must not be tampered with, much less be translated into Turkish or French. Consequently, nobody except the German diplomats and soldiery, together with a sprinkling of the more cosmopolitan representatives of the Sublime Porte, knew what was going on. The performance had to be held indoors, an insufferable handicap as the balmy Turkish spring gave way to sticky summer heat. Though performances for upper-class ladies were organized separately from those of men, they still excited the opposition of the Stamboul crowd, which resented and vilified so many women showing themselves off in one place. The city’s German merchant community virtually boycotted the
travelling theater. They hated Jäckh for his frequent and voluble depictions of a golden Turkey, which they had come to know as a hellhole. (Weber 194)

A similar view of Jäckh was expressed in the diary of German Orientalist, Karl Süßheim. He commented on a speech given by Jäckh concerning the importance of German involvement in the reform process of the Turkish school system. The speech was being presented to a Turkish audience and interpreted directly into Turkish. Süßheim remarked:

> After he had exaggerated out of all proportion the importance of Germany from several points of view, and the services rendered by her to the Turks, he proposed to reform the Ottoman education system with the help of Germany. This included the foundation of a German University in Istanbul and the increase of the number, now twelve, of German schools on Ottoman soil, for which the necessary capital had been raised in Germany, up to the number six hundred – of the French schools. All elementary schools, finally, should be handed over to the Germans. (36)

Süssheim noted that the translator, realizing that Jäckh’s claims were rather outrageous, had attempted to reword and tone down the content of Jäckh’s address. He was, however, interrupted by someone in the audience who was fluent in both languages who insisted that he was translating the speech incorrectly. The situation was clearly awkward, and many of the guests openly discussed the intentions and various interpretations of the speech once it was concluded (36).

The distrust and animosity between Jäckh and many of the other German interests in the Empire appeared to be mutual. In his 1944 work, *The Rising Crescent*, which was written to inform the American public about the importance of Turkey at the height of the Second World War, Jäckh was also quick to vent his frustrations about other Germans in the Ottoman Empire to a presumed staunch anti-German audience. While the majority of his anger was directed at
Germans merchants, he also focused on Liman von Sanders, the German General who had been instrumental in leading the Turkish army in the crucial defense of the Dardanelles. Von Sanders was a traditional military man and a calculating military strategist in the tradition of the old Prussian aristocracy. As one might imagine, Jäckh and General von Sanders did not share the same level of optimism concerning the future of the Ottoman Empire or the Turkish people. Despite von Sanders tireless efforts to defend the Dardenelles and reorganize Ottoman forces, Jäckh used the opportunity to distance himself from Liman and the Prussian military aristocracy for which he stood. Jäckh commented:

> Even General Liman von Sanders has unconsciously committed anti-Turkish, even anti-Islamic, blunders out there in the Dardanelles. History will certainly credit him, together with Mustafa Kemal, with having successfully defended the Dardanelles. Yet Liman is so shortsighted that he does not realize—and he doesn’t want, either, that he is constantly provoking Turkish peasants to fanatical fury by using their dogs as targets for shooting practice. Sometimes he kills the unsuspecting animals with a revolver while riding in his car, and other times he merely wounds them just to see them run away howling like mad probably dying somewhere in the fields. (Jäckh, *Rising Crescent* 136-137)

The German merchants, who had risked everything to run businesses in the highly volatile region, also received little sympathy from Jäckh. According to him, they selfishly put their own interests over his mission to help the Turks form their own nation state. In early 1918, he recounted in a letter to Friedrich Naumann the following about German merchants in Constantinople:
They are mostly ignorant bourgeois snobs, viewing everything from the froglike perspective of their own advantages and disadvantages … Constantinople is even worse than the average of these German colonies. These eternal shopkeepers in the German colony shout bloody murder if anything is done to help Turkey to gain its strength and independence, which is the right of all peoples” (Jäckh, *Rising Crescent* 135).

Also of note in this work is his distance from the German effort to incite a Holy War against British interests in the Ottoman Empire. During the time period, however, Jäckh seemed to think that a Jihad was a viable method to push back the British in the Arabian Peninsula. In reference to the efforts to incite a Moslem Holy War, Jäckh commented in 1944 that this was a plan of German agents, Max von Oppenheim and other Pan-Germans, with no mention of his own support or involvement. While Jäckh does not explicitly state that he had no involvement in the operation, its complete omission in his writings about the matter in 1944 is quite puzzling, to say the least.

Unfortunately for Jäckh, he produced an enormous amount of written evidence showing his emphatic support for the use of Holy War as a tool against British forces in the region. For example, in a political pamphlet from 1915 entitled *Die deutsch-türkische Waffenbrüderschaft*, Jäckh noted:

Die Lawine des Islams rollt über uns, sie wältzt und wächst und wältzt über die Welt hin; Sie erst erweitert den europäischen Krieg zum wirklichen Weltkrieg..... Dieser heilige Krieg wird nicht nur ausgerufen, er ist auch organisiert: das werden seine Wirkungen bestätigen, nicht morgen und nicht übermorgen, aber in langsamer sicherer Reife (Jäckh, *Waffenbrüderschaft* 25-6).
Support of the Jihad can also be found in other sources published by Jäckh, including an newspaper article written in the Hilfe on September 10th, 1914 ( Ernst Jaeckh Papers, Box 14, Scrapbook 25-26 ).

The attacks against the German military establishment and the various business interests served a deeper purpose than simply settling a personal score with many people who had belittled his efforts in Turkey. Jäckh was clearly trying to show that he never subscribed to what he called pure “Pan-German” aims, which viewed Turkey as a “country not to be liberated, and a nation to be made independent, but an object for Pan-German expansion” (Ernst Jäckh, Rising Crescent 145). He noted that unlike these military men and merchants his goal was first and foremost to aid Turkey on its mission in becoming a modern nation. Turkey in his mind would be integrated in a type of federation of nations under German leadership, the perfect completion of the Mitteleuropa ideal proposed by Friedrich Naumann. After reading one of Jäckh’s pamphlets on the matter, Colonel von Papen, who ironically would become German Ambassador to Turkey during the Third Reich, clearly understood Jäckh’s notion of Germany’s position in Europe after the end of hostilities. He noted:

Your thesis in your pamphlet seems to be a “League of Nations” within a Greater Central Europe. The basic idea is sound but not in the form of a union between independent states and nations. You speak of a “Turkish Turkey”, a “Greek Greece,” a “Serbian Serbia,” and so on. All these nations, on the contrary, should be German vassals. It would be the most wonderful job of my life to work for that kind of Pan-German Berlin-Baghdad. I hope that someday I will be able to accomplish it. (Jäckh, Rising Crescent 138)\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{22} The pamphlet originally appeared in June,1916 and was entitled Werkbund und Mitteleuropa.
According to Jäckh, this citation shows the dichotomy between his notion of the new world order in Europe: Germany as the leader of a transnational loosely linked federation, and that of von Papen: Germany as the authoritarian overlord of much of Europe and the Middle East. Fearing these Pan-German attitudes would hurt his own soft power imperial ambitions in the region, he wrote to his close confident Hans Humann concerning his view of how the Berlin-Baghdad alliance concept should be presented in May of 1914. He noted that typical Pan-German attitudes and statements could give the impression that Germany would annex parts of the Empire and was not seeking to strengthen it to be a strong partner in the future (Jäckh Goldene Pflug 218-219)

In his memoirs, Jäckh made a valiant attempt to disconnect himself and Naumann’s idea of Mitteleuropa from that of Pan-German aims in the period. He correctly pointed out that men like Naumann and himself were liberals and not representatives of the conservative Prussian Jünkertum. However, it is very difficult to separate Jäckh’s notion of German hegemony in Mitteleuropa from German militarism and war aims in the period. After all, when Jäckh’s confidant, Friedrich Naumann, published Mitteleuropa in the middle of the First War, it was clearly not a work intended to offer an alternative peaceful solution to German war aims. This has been documented in several important monographs on the history of the period, including Fritz Fischer’s extensive analysis of German war aims during the First World War in Griff nach der Welthmacht (1963). Jäckh may have been a liberal idealist who truly believed in a vision of an integrated and peacefully united Europe, especially after the First World War, but his record in the period before the First World War clearly does not distinguish him from the Pan-German nationalist agenda. If anything, Jäckh was more concerned that such Germans, including soldiers and military men, would hurt the German cause for hegemony in the region by treating the
Ottoman and Austria allies in a derogatory fashion (Jäckh *Goldene Pflug*, 230). Jäckh realized early on that Germany was not powerful enough nor was it militarily or politically expedient to take direct control of the territories that should be integrated into the German led *Mitteleuropa*. Therefore, Jäckh was aggravated by Pan-German visions of territorial annexation not because he found their national-imperialist agenda troubling, but rather because it hindered progress on his own imperialist project of creating a confederation of states from the North Sea down to the Middle East under German leadership.

Furthermore, Jäckh’s desire to separate himself from this part of his life is clearly motivated by his presence in the United States. Naturally, one can understand why Jäckh would want to distance himself from his past in 1944 as a German living in the United States, but the notion that the *Mitteleuropa* concept and his efforts to promote the German-Turkish relationship were not a part of German war aims is nothing more than a disingenuous attempt to reposition himself from being associated with German militarism and authoritarianism. As a man who had redefined himself several times before, Jäckh seemed to have a clear sense of which aspects of his biography were suitable to which audiences. Just as his earlier works in Germany were skillfully directed to its intended audience, *The Rising Crescent* in 1944 was a perfect example of Jäckh cleverly selling his knowledge and the importance of Turkey to an American audience.

Although the basis for the concept of *Mitteleuropa* is inextricably connected to early twentieth century German militarism, the reader is forced to deal with some difficult questions concerning current political developments in Europe after examining Jäckh’s view of *Mitteleuropa*. While his notion of *Mitteleuropa* with Turkey as a strategic partner seemed far-fetched in an age of great nationalist movements at the start of the twentieth century, it is difficult not to take into account the relative success of European integration and cooperation
along similar lines in the second half of the twentieth century. Is the European Union, dominated by the Germans with its main force of monetary regulation, the European Central Bank in Frankfurt, not somewhat similar to the notion of *Mitteleuropa*? Moreover, the fact that EU expansion to Turkey is still a crucial question only makes Jäckh’s vision even more relevant and interesting to the modern observer. While a treatment of the similarities between *Mitteleuropa* and the institutional structures of the European Union is beyond the scope of this research project, the obvious similarities are apparent and force the reader to confront some uncomfortable realities about German war aspiration and Jäckh’s philosophy.

While the Germany that is leading the European Union today is clearly not the aspiring militaristic power it was in the first half of the twentieth century, it is nonetheless remarkable that the Federal Republic of Germany has found itself in a leadership position regarding political and economic integration in Europe despite its cataclysmic defeat in two World Wars. This means that the ideas proposed by Jäckh and other Peaceful Imperialists were at some level fundamentally sound and have to be taken seriously despite the fact that they are inextricably connected with German militarism and expansionist aspirations during the First World War.
CHAPTER VI: PEACEFUL IMPERIALISM: IN THE SHADOW OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Research on German involvement in the Ottoman Empire in this period cannot avoid the topic of the Armenian Genocide. Whether reading through the large body of secondary literature on the topic or looking at the memoirs of Ernst Jäckh, the researcher is continually confronted with references to the expulsions and treatment of the Armenians during the First World War. Considering the sizable German presence in the region coupled with the aforementioned policy of a “Vernichtungskrieg” in German Southwest Africa in the same period, serious questions do arise concerning a possible German involvement in the policies of extermination.23 This chapter will provide an overview of German involvement and the historical situation surrounding the genocide. In addition to this, it will examine the accountability of various German figures with regard to their actions during the genocide.

German Involvement: a Mixed Legacy

The study of German involvement in the Armenian Genocide is rather complicated for several reasons. First, the need to answer the question of German involvement is intensified by the specter of the Holocaust. Scholars in the twenty first century have the ability to see that German militarism, and particularly German military culture, resulted in the perpetration of genocide of almost unfathomable proportions in the middle of the twentieth century. Additionally, many scholars are not only aware of the catastrophic policy of “Vernichtungskrieg” that was employed in German Southwest Africa in the early twentieth

23 For a concise summary of the events surrounding the genocide, please refer to the first section of the following work. Hull, Isabel V. Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005.
century, but are also aware that many individuals in the Ottoman officer corps had been trained by the German military mission in roughly the same period that Germans were utilizing so-called “annihilation techniques” elsewhere in the world. As a result of this and the understandably emotionally charged environment surrounding the genocide, there may be a tendency to overstate or distort the actual German connection to the genocide. This tendency to overstate German involvement should not, however, dissuade serious researchers from looking at German influence and acquiescence in Turkish treatment of the Armenians.

Secondly, the German response to the genocide is varied and hard to classify as completely pro-Turkish or clearly against the genocidal acts. As the reader will see in this chapter, some German figures, such as Ernst Jäckh, turned a blind eye to the events for political and personal expediency (Kloosterhuis 618). Others, such as Major Eberhard Wolffskeel, actively supported the genocide and partook in killings themselves (Dadrian 264-5). The Peaceful Imperialist movement was itself divided on its view of the Armenian question. While Jäckh chose to ignore the plight of the Armenians in order to further the German-Turkish relationship, his close confidant in Turkey, Hans Humann, made more direct statements about the genocide. Humann, who had grown up in Smyrna and spoke fluent Turkish, explained to the American Ambassador,

I have lived in Turkey the largest part of my life… and I know the Armenians. I also know that both Armenians and Turks cannot live together in this country. One of these races has to go. And I don’t blame the Turks for what they are doing to the Armenians. I think they are entirely justified. The weaker nation must succumb. The Armenians desire to dismember Turkey; they are against the Turks
and Germans in this war, and they therefore have no right to exist here
(Morgenthau, 375).

Humann’s quotation is not only relevant because of his closeness to Jäckh, many of the leading members of the Peaceful Imperialist movement, and Enver Pasha himself, but also because it so clearly articulated the notion of “Vernichtungskrieg” that had shaped the German experience in its main colonial undertaking, South West Africa. Although Humann had grown up in the international port city of Smyrna, he was now working as a naval attaché for the German military establishment and thus had been heavily exposed to German military culture in the period. Humann, similar to von der Goltz in Turkey and General von Trotha in South West Africa, believed that modern clashes represented an all-out confrontation between two peoples. Noncombatants and combatants alike were now part of cataclysmic struggles where one nation would survive and the other would completely perish. This style of thinking not only provided the foundation for the liquidation of Jews a generation later, but also reinforced the idea among certain segments of German society that wholesale liquidation of entire peoples was a justified and standard practice of modern warfare.

While this citation conveys Humann’s outright support of the genocide, others, including a fellow Peaceful Imperialist, Paul Rohrbach, were far more critical of Turkish treatment of the Armenians and vehemently disagreed with German acquiescence in the expulsions (Jäckh Goldene Pflug, 151). In fact, two of the biggest supporters of the Armenian cause during the period were German. Armin Wegner, who was stationed in the region with the German military, sent out numerous photographs documenting the genocide despite the strict German military censor. The German theologian and oriental scholar, Johannes Lepsius, provided one of the most
complete documentations of the genocide. He had been active in the Armenian cause after a series of massacres in the 1890s and became one of the central figures in Europe on behalf of Armenians. Lespius’ legacy as the protector of the Armenians even gained him a spot in a novel about the Armenian Genocide, *Die vierzig Tage des Musa Dagh* (1933), written by the Austrian-Jewish author Franz Werfel. Recently, Lespius’ name has resurfaced again, this time because his documentation of the genocide has come under scrutiny from Cem Özgönül, a German-Turkish publicist based in Cologne. In his work, *Der Mythos eines Völkermordes. Eine kritische Betrachtung der Lepsiusdokumente sowie der deutschen Rolle in Geschichte und Gegenwart der armenischen Frage* (2006), Özgönül intended to disprove the validity of certain aspects of Lespius’ storyline as well as demonstrate clear cases of factual manipulations and omissions on behalf of Lepsius. While he accurately pointed out some inaccuracies and omissions on the part of Lepsius, he received heavy criticism from various circles in Germany for not examining the topic in a balanced manner.

As the aforementioned controversy demonstrates, the historical debate about the genocide and German involvement in it is still fluid. The presence of a sizable Turkish minority in Germany should ensure that the historical debate concerning this matter will remain in the public forum for years to come. Furthermore, the aforementioned examples show that the German response to the genocide was far from uniform in German society. Now that the reader has had a chance to see some examples of the extreme responses that various Germans had in regard to the Armenian Genocide, the next section will provide the necessary historical background information before examining the specific role of the Peaceful imperialist policy, which was led by Friedrich Naumann and Ernst Jäckh.
The Armenian Genocide: A Basic Overview

The genocidal acts against Armenians within the Ottoman Empire remain to this day a highly contested matter. The Turkish state, which developed out of the core of the former Ottoman holdings, vehemently objects to the classification of the reprisals against Armenians as genocide. While the Turkish government does not contest the fact that a large scale conflict took place between Armenians and Ottoman forces from 1915-1917, it officially views the conflict as a type of civil strife within the Ottoman Empire, with the Armenians having acted as a proxy force of the Russian military. Within modern Turkey, the genocide remains such a politically contentious matter that even mentioning it or attempting to come to terms with the trauma could mean imprisonment or blacklisting within many societal institutions. As recently as 2005, the famous Turkish writer, Orhan Pamuk, found himself in the middle of a political firestorm when he publicly stated in an interview with the Züricher Tagesanzeiger that one million Armenians had been killed during the First World War.24

While the exact nature and cause of the aggressive acts against the Armenians remains highly controversial, what is known is this. Starting in the nineteenth century, the ruling class of the Ottoman Empire had to play the precarious geo-political game of keeping its large Christian populations tame and loyal while simultaneously maintaining its position as the preeminent power in the Islamic world. In order to deal with growing discontent among its non-Muslim population, the Ottoman establishment instituted the Tanzimat reform process in 1839. This process looked to create a more modern society based on a transnational “Ottoman” identity. While this reform process had good intentions and seemed like a viable way to stay in power for strategists in the Sultan’s court, it was unable to defuse nationalist sentiment among the various

24 In the interview with the Züricher Tagesanzeiger, Pamuk remarked. “Man hat hier 30.000 Kurden umgebracht. Und eine Million Armenier. Und fast niemand traut sich, das zu erwähnen. Also mache ich es. Und dafür hassen sie mich”. These remarks later led to a court trail in Turkey in which he was charged with denigration of Turkishness.
peoples of the Empire. Moreover, the reform process was in many respects too little too late, coming more than a decade after losing two important European outposts of the Empire, the Greek provinces in 1821, and Serbia in 1830.

In addition to a sizable presence in many of the trading centers of the Empire, the Armenians lived primarily in the Eastern Anatolian heartland, and were ironically not highly involved in the fights for national independence in the European provinces. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the Armenians were even considered to be a loyal millet by the Ottoman establishment (Dadrian 192). However, as the Armenians began to define themselves as a nation in the second half of the nineteenth century and seek better treatment in the largely Muslim state, friction between them and the various non-Christian ethnic groups began to emerge. As the nineteenth century progressed, the Armenians were particularly susceptible to pogroms and discrimination for several reasons.

First, the vast majority of Armenians lived either in major trading centers, such as Istanbul and Izmir, or in the middle of the Anatolian heartland surrounded by other ethnic groups. In a pre-industrialized society where mobility was greatly limited, the Armenians came to represent the image of Christians for many Turks, Kurds and other Muslims in a time when Christians were responsible for the nationalistic uprisings that were destabilizing the Empire. Moreover, in a time of growing nationalism, the Armenians found themselves in the unfortunate position of being squeezed between various Turkic peoples to the East and West and the caucus periphery of the Russian world to the North. Being located on the fault line between Arab, Turkic, and Russian civilization meant that the Armenians were faced with the almost impossible task of consolidating and protecting their interests from the various entanglements of the three major ethnic groups surrounding them.
Although tensions had risen in the previous decades, the Armenian-Turkish relationship began to deteriorate badly in the 1870s. The catalyst for this deterioration once again did not come from direct confrontation, but rather from conflicts in other areas of the Ottoman Empire coupled with severe economic and agricultural stagnation in Anatolia. This negative development began in the early years of the decade with a strong nationalist movement for independence in Bulgaria. At the same time as calls for independence were growing louder in Bulgaria and other parts of the Empire, the Anatolian section of the Empire was afflicted by severe drought and subsequent food shortages. The decline in agriculture led to a dramatic reduction in tax revenues, which ultimately bankrupted the Ottoman state in 1875.

Having to deal with widespread drought, economic ruin, and nationalist uprisings throughout the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire was showing signs of complete breakdown. Making matters worse, a large uprising erupted in Bulgaria again in 1876, which the Ottoman state was clearly ill prepared to handle. It hired irregular mercenaries to put down the rebellion with disastrous results. Thousands of Bulgarians were brutally massacred while members of the international press were on location reporting all of the horrific details.25

The Ottoman Empire had lost all public support in Europe while it was in a very vulnerable state. In the aftermath of the Bulgarian uprising, the Empire’s natural enemies recognized their opportunity to strike at a time of great weakness. As a result, the Ottoman Empire quickly found itself in a war with the Russian Empire and other aspiring nations in the Balkans without much sympathy from abroad. With the intervention of the British Fleet, the Ottoman forces were able to stop the Russians from entering Constantinople and obtained a truce. The truce, however, came at a heavy price, forcing the Ottomans to give up much of their

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25 One of the most influential war correspondents at the scene was an American, Januarius MacGahan, who reported extensively in the London Daily News about the atrocities in graphic details. His accounts of the atrocities influenced the way in which many Europeans viewed the Turks.
remaining holdings in the Balkans. The initial treaty of San Stefano, signed between the Turks and the Russians, called for Russia to watch over the implementation of Armenian minority rights within the Empire. Even though this treaty was later replaced by the Treaty of Berlin, it still reaffirmed the fact that many Armenians looked to fellow Christians in Russia for protection in a predominately Muslim state. The notion that the Armenians were a “fifth column” coupled with growing nationalist aspiration of the Empire’s Moslem population left the Armenians with little room to act or define their position in the new mono-ethnic nation states that were emerging.

Involvement of Ernst Jäckh and Peaceful Imperialism

At this juncture, question of German involvement and particularly the involvement of the German-Turkish Association organized by Ernst Jäckh must also be considered. For his own part, it seemed that Jäckh was well aware of the persecution, pogroms, and genocidal liquidation of the Armenians. In fact, Jäckh even made reference to pogroms in the 1890s against the Armenians in his work Der Aufsteigende Halbmond (1916),\textsuperscript{26} noting that over 200,000 Armenians were killed and over 50,000 more forcibly displaced (Jäckh Halbmond 139). Despite his knowledge of the massacres and the high level of mistreatment of Armenians, Jäckh pursued a clear pro-Turkish course, which he felt was in the best interest of the German state. One could, of course, give Jäckh the benefit of the doubt when one considered that his initial involvement in the Empire was at the time of the Young Turk Revolution. He, along with many others including Armenians, initially believed that the CUP would introduce democratic reforms and ensure minority rights. However, these widespread reforms for minority rights never came to pass. In

\textsuperscript{26} Jäckh’s work Der aufsteigende Halbmond went through several editions after its first printing in 1908. It was republished again in 1914 and 1916 with some different content and different prefaces.
fact, the widespread hope for change was almost immediately overshadowed by the Adana Massacres in 1909 in which well over 10,000 Armenians were killed. The horrific nature of the pogroms had little effect on Jäckh’s opinion of the Turks and the future of the Ottoman Empire, and he still published his first monograph on the region that same year.

Jäckh’s disregard for the Armenians was shared by many other members in the Liberal Imperialist circle who were instrumental in helping him develop his imperialist political platform in Turkey. Friedrich Naumann, for example, looked to integrate the Ottoman Empire economically into the larger German sphere of hegemony. The Ottoman Empire, in his mind, would supply Germany with the raw materials necessary to sustain her growth (Kaiser 14). In his writings, he represented the Armenian massacres of the period as necessary self-defense for the Ottoman state to protect the integrity of their Empire (13). Hugo Grothe, who later helped Jäckh in his efforts to build up a German-Turkish association, wrote a doctoral thesis on the need and perspectives for German colonization of the Middle East. Grothe noted that small scale German colonial efforts in the nineteenth century had been negatively impacted by the “cheating and usury” of Armenians (16). Grothe went further to say that the massacres in the late nineteenth century were a result of Armenian “bloodsucking activities and not Muslim ‘religious fanaticism’” (16). According to Naumann and Grothe, the Armenians could not be trusted and were a threat to German penetration of the region.

Jäckh’s position, while not as clearly anti-Armenian as some of his closest confidants, was clearly not sympathetic to the Armenians. His views on the issue can be seen in the various newspaper articles he wrote in the period, which are also almost entirely pro-Turkish. During the Balkan wars, Jäckh not only invoked religious imagery, claiming that the Turks were being slaughtered by an organized Christian onslaught, but also praised the transnational nature of the
Ottoman military (Jäckh, *Ernst Jaeckh Papers*). For example, in October of 1912, Jäckh wrote in the *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten* about the tolerant and all inclusive Ottoman Army. He even noted the inclusion in the military of “jene Juden, die im Mittelalter aus dem fanatischen Spanien vertrieben worden sind und in der toleranten Türkei eine bessere Heimat gefunden haben.“ (*Jäckh, Ernst Jaeckh Papers*). One has to assume or at least hope that readers in the period would have skeptically digested Jäckh’s description of the Ottoman military as tolerant and inclusive, considering the fact that the Ottoman Empire was experiencing severe sectarian violence and showed all the signs of economic and political instability.

Later in his life, Jäckh painted a slightly different picture of himself to an English-speaking audience during the Second World War. In 1944, Jäckh remodeled his original work on Turkey *Der Aufsteigende Halbmond*, and released it as *The Rising Crescent: Turkey, yesterday, today and tomorrow*. In this work, he noted that he was able to use his personal connections within the Ottoman establishment to gain an audience with the Grand Vizier Talaat Pasha.27 After learning of the horrible treatment of Armenian families in Konya from a Swiss friend, Jäckh sought an audience with the Grand Vizer and was able to convince him to allow the innocent Armenian families to stay (*Jäckh The Rising Crescent*, 123). While this action may have been helpful to some Armenian families living in the region, it is clearly just a small action considering the widespread scope of the massacres. It is interesting, however, how Jäckh felt the need to show that he had done something for the Armenian cause as he was writing this work in the early 1940s, when mass deportation and extermination of European Jewry would have been on the mind of any informed observer such as Jäckh. Furthermore, it was clear at that juncture

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27 Talaat Pasha later fled to Germany after the war. In 1921, he was assassination by an Armenian, Soghomon Tehlirian, as part of a retribution plot against Turkish officials. Soghomon Tehlirian was found not guilty by reason of temporary insanity by a German court.
that Turkey would not enter the conflict on the side of the axis powers, and thus there was no need to tailor his position on the genocide to aid their alliance with the West.

Four years later, however, a different position on the Armenian Genocide appeared in Jäckh’s memoirs, this time with a clearly formulated interpretation of the events that transpired between Turks and Armenians in those years. In a passage about his experiences during the First World War, Jäckh claimed that he enjoyed good relationships with a large number of prominent Armenians and even actively worked to provide them aid during the war years (Jäckh Goldene Pflug 151). More revealing however is the footnote Jäckh placed directly under these remarks. In this particular footnote, which is almost half a page in length, Jäckh took the time to provide an in-depth explanation of why he thought the genocide took place. He noted that:


Jäckh’s position with regard to the genocide was provocative for several reasons. First and foremost, his position was unwaveringly pro-Turkish and exhibited only limited sympathy for the Armenians. Jäckh seemed unwilling to recognize the genocidal qualities of the systematic deportation and subsequent elimination of Armenians from a society in which they had lived for centuries. Even if certain segments of the Armenian population sympathized with Russian forces, it certainly did not justify the wholesale murder and expulsion of an entire people, nor did it justify deeming an entire nation as a “fifth column” of foreign military forces. Jäckh’s conclusion that the expulsion of the Armenians was simply a power struggle during the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire greatly oversimplified the complicated interplay of nationalist, economic, and religious forces that contributed to the genocidal expulsion of the Armenians.

As the aforementioned historical overview of the genocide demonstrated, tensions between Christians, including Armenians, and other Muslim elements in Ottoman society had been building up over the nineteenth century. Sectarianism, ethnic tensions, and the emergence of national identities all contributed to the ultimate collapse of the Empire and the systematic genocidal attacks. Ultimately, the drive for a mono-ethnic Turkish state, an endeavor that was
expressively endorsed by Jäckh, trumped any notion of rehabilitating the multi-ethnic institution of the Ottoman Empire.

Furthermore, it is important to take into account the historical context in which he wrote the passage in order to better understand Jäckh’s motives. This particular passage of Jäckh’s memoirs was written in 194928, at a time when he was still active politically. This passage, whether it represents his true feelings about the origins of the Armenian genocide or not, may very well have been tailored to his political aspirations at the time in the United States.

Jäckh, who had become a professor at Columbia University in 1940, had two specific political goals in this period. First and foremost, he was looking to develop Area Studies programs focusing on the Middle East at Columbia University. Additionally, he sought to form an American-Turkish organization based on the same ideals as the one he had formed earlier between Germany and Turkey during the First World War. Jäckh used his position as a professor at Columbia University to lobby the American political establishment on the importance of Turkey in defending the Mediterranean against Soviet expansion.

Just as he put the wartime alliance ahead of accurately portraying the plight of the Armenians during the First World War, Jäckh was willing to overlook the importance of the genocide in order to solidify the American-Turkish alliance against the Soviet Union. Had he connected the modern Turkish state with the notion of genocide in 1949, only five years after the enormity of the Holocaust had become known throughout the entire world, he risked discrediting the Turks and losing his opportunity to forge a lasting relationship between Turkey, the United States, and other NATO allies. Moreover, the way in which Jäckh simply dismissed the genocide as a footnote in his memoir demonstrates that the Armenian cause was not considered

28 Although the monograph Der Goldene Pflug: Lebensernte eines Weltbürgers was first published in 1954, Jäckh makes a specific reference to the fact that he is writing this passage in 1949.
controversial in a world that had just been torn apart by systematic killings on an almost unfathomable scale. Jäckh did not need to mask any anti-Armenian sentiment in 1949. In fact, his anti-Armenian sentiment may have been received enthusiastically in various political circles in the United States. In the geo-political situation of 1949, as the Cold War struggle with the Soviet Union was becoming apparent to all observers, Jäckh would not have been challenged for taking an anti-Armenian stance because it was considered essential to get Turkish cooperation in the NATO alliance to counteract the emerging Soviet threat. Moreover, the new Armenian state maintained close cultural ties with Russia and became an integral part of the Soviet Union, thus making Armenia and the Armenian cause less important to strategic planners in the United States. Once again, Jäckh was a man who knew how to sell himself and the Turks to a variety of audiences.
CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

In the end, the dream of German hegemony in the Orient never came to pass. Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire were defeated in the First World War, with the latter two Empires ceasing to exist as a result of the peace settlement. In Germany, dreams of Mitteleuropa and Pan-German hegemony faded into obscurity as the political and economic instability of the interwar years forced many to focus on more pressing issues domestically. In the former Ottoman Empire, several new nation states emerged from the giant polyglot domain that had ruled the region for centuries. After several years of conflict between various factions in the region, a modern Turkish state was formed in 1923 under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, who was instrumental in implanting a strict secularist and reformist ideology in the development of the modern Turkish state.

The German interest in the Ottoman Empire, which began as a scholarly endeavor in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, quickly developed into a combined engagement of state and non-state actors after the founding of the German Empire in 1871. The official relationship with the Ottoman Empire began with a military mission in the 1880s and was quickly expanded to include the building of major infrastructure projects in an attempt to modernize the Ottoman State.

Starting in 1909, Ernst Jäckh, a German liberal who subscribed to Friedrich Naumann’s approach of liberal imperialism, became the main figure promoting the German-Turkish cause. Jäckh used his connection both in Germany and the Ottoman Empire to forge a German-Turkish partnership. This partnership culminated during the First World War in which Jäckh’s German-
Turkish association provided a soft power imperialist strategy to complement the German war effort in the Empire. Jäckh’s strategy, while flawed in some aspects and silent on the plight of the Armenians, was successful in fostering greater understanding between Turks and Germans. Unlike other strategists of his day, Jäckh not only looked beyond the typical model of taking direct control of colonial holdings, but also envisioned a Europe that was bound together economically and politically in a confederation under German leadership. His notion of nation building and his concept of a united Europe are fascinating not only because they stem from German nationalist aspirations at the beginning of the twentieth century, but also because they have much in common with modern notions of soft power nation building and European integration. Moreover, Jäckh and his world view become even more fascinating when one considers his biography. Not only is he a bridge between Wilhelmine liberal nationalism and Weimar liberalism, but also a prime example of the contribution made by many European exiles in the development of area studies programs at American institutions of higher education.
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